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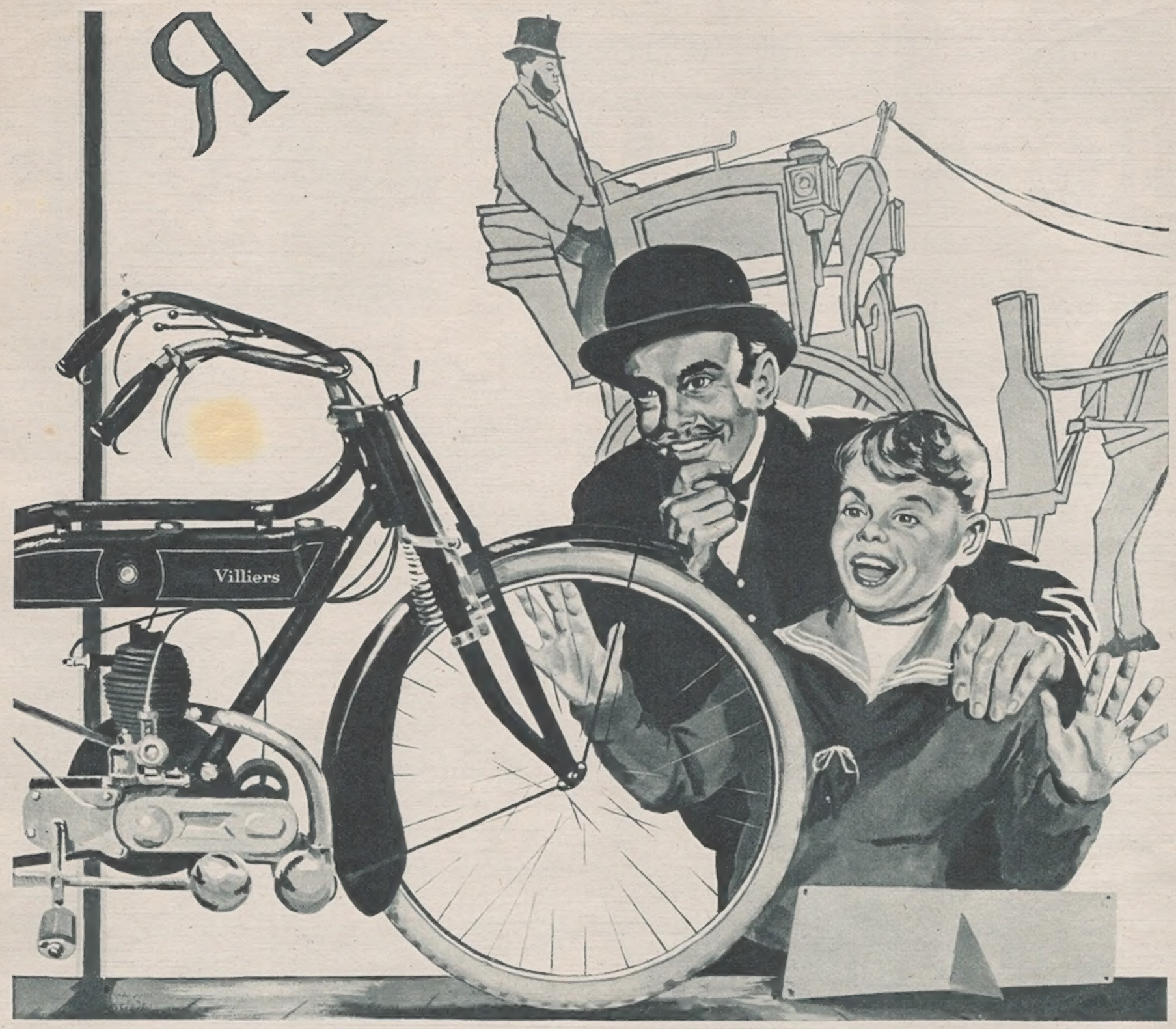

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TEMPLE BAR 2468 SEPTEMBER 8, 1956 VOLUME 100 NUMBER 2619

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Malcolm MacDonald opened Singapore's new water-ski club in informal attire

WHEN Malcolm MacDonald, then Commissioner General in South East Asia, arrived to open Singapore's Supersonic Water Ski Club, he took off his trousers and threw them across a chair. Then he walked forward to cut the red tape at the clubhouse entrance. While the audience, mainly Chinese, laughed and cheered, MacDonald took off his shirt to reveal a pair of swimming trunks in which he gave an expert exhibition of water ski-ing.

MacDonald, whose story *Borneo People* begins on page 11, has been cutting red tape from colonial administration ever since he was sent to Malaya in 1946. He earned the tag "the shirtsleeve diplomat" by appearing at a concert in black tie and no dinner jacket.

He told his critics: "Sometimes I take off my dinner jacket when I should keep it on. Often I put my tie in my pocket when a gentleman would have it round his neck. Occasionally I wear a Hawaiian shirt when I should wear a bush shirt. It is well known that some of my best friends do not wear any shirts at all. They do not even wear trousers. They skip around in the loin cloths and brief skirts of nature's gentlemen in the deep jungles of Borneo."

A small, squat man of fifty-five, MacDonald earned great popularity with Chinese, Indians and Malays through his unorthodox behaviour and contempt for convention. He won the confidence of Burmese nationalists, and grew to be a great influence in Siam.

When he left Singapore to become High Commissioner in India, he said that his job had given him no chance to be anything but a universal stomach. "I have taken Chinese breakfasts, European lunches, Indian teas, Indonesian cocktails and Japanese suppers, all washed down with a well-known drink made in Scotland."

AFTER Keith Ellis had completed the article on quick reading on page 17, he set out to discover just how quickly it could be read. His own time on a passage of similar length was two and a half minutes for the 850 words. Most of his colleagues in JOHN BULL office took less than two minutes, averaging about 450 words a minute. One read the article in fifty-five seconds, or more than nine hundred words a minute.

By ordinary standards, says Commander Affleck-Graves, who runs the quick-reading centre featured in the article, such a speed is "pretty phenomenal." But he adds: "People who have to read a lot in their work—especially journalists—learn to devise their own ways of beating the clock."

Affleck-Graves is convinced that the last word in quick reading lies with the author, not the reader. The more exciting the subject matter, the faster the reading speed. "The employers of some of my pupils," he says, "would be amazed at the speed with which certain of the more romantic set passages are read."

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Free Speech

- **Should sea rescue be a full-time job?**
- **Play centres beat holiday boredom**
- **Common sense is a guide to law**

WHILE I was on holiday at a south coast resort, the lifeboat rocket went up at 11 a.m. one day. A small boat was in difficulties at sea.

A crowd of us collected to watch the lifeboat set out. By ten past eleven, about half the lifeboat crew had gathered, riding in on bicycles and running from all directions. By twenty past, they had all assembled, and climbed into a launch to reach the lifeboat itself, moored in the harbour. A hundred yards from shore, the launch propeller was fouled by weeds, and a little farther on the launch ran aground.

Finally, it was nearly half an hour before the lifeboat even began to go to the rescue.

It is surely a disgrace for a seafaring nation like Britain to rely on badly sited equipment and gallant volunteers. We rely on voluntary subscriptions of £750,000 each year to keep the system going. Our sailors are entitled to a full-time national lifeboat service, preferably combined with the coastguard such as in the U.S.A.—M. L. C., Orpington, Kent.

Hornless Cattle

At a county agricultural show recently I noticed this advertisement on one of the stalls: "It will pay you to de-horn your calves. Get a de-horning outfit now." I should have thought that to remove a calf's horns, which are its natural means of defence, is cruel.—MISS S. E. JONES, Carmarthen.

"De-horning cattle, if properly done, is not cruel," says the R.S.P.C.A. The National Farmers' Union adds: "Cattle are domesticated animals and their need for defence is small. The reason for de-horning is that many farmers keep their stock in yards, instead of fields, for the winter. More cattle can be herded together without horns, and there is less risk of their injuring each other."

Getting Involved

While moving house recently, I was surprised at the number of official bodies which have to be informed of a change of address.

For a family including elderly and young people, these might include the gas, electricity, water and domestic fuel offices, the district council, the Post Office, Inland Revenue office, motor taxation office, National Health Service, Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, the local education authority, and perhaps even the police.

Most of these would be on anyone's list; which shows just how deeply each one of us is involved in the Welfare State. — B. J. BRINKWORTH, Ash Vale, Aldershot, Hants.

Holiday Playtime

There is no holiday-time problem of bored schoolchildren ("Free Speech," August 11) in Coventry. Here we have play centres for hundreds, or even thousands, of children. I am a teacher, and also a play leader at one of the centres. If your correspondent, Mrs. Colly, would come to one of them, she would find the answer to her prayers. — GERALD DENLEY, Coventry, Warwicks.

"We have six play centres in the city's parks," says Coventry Education Committee. "They are equipped with playing apparatus of all kinds for use by children in the summer holidays. Each centre is in the charge of two leaders—a man and a woman—and two helpers, usually senior schoolgirls.

"The centres are very popular with the children, and parents find them a great help, too—especially those who are out at work all day."

Not So Colossal?

Recently a cinema owner was heavily fined for not showing the stipulated quota of British films.

It says little for the quality and interest in our films if the equivalent of a tariff barrier has to be set up so that competition from outside need not be feared. — H. E. BRAVERY, Dorking, Surrey.

The Cinematograph Films Acts prescribe that thirty per cent of "first feature" films shown, and twenty-five per cent of those shown in supporting programmes, must be British.

Real Benefactors

Instead of putting up statues to politicians and generals, we should erect them to people who have provided aids to happy living, such as the inventors of football, cricket, the lift, motion pictures and the domestic water-tap. Why remember people who were merely successful organizers of trouble, and forget those who spread sunshine? — MRS. D. COOK, Disraeli Road, London, S.W.15.

Matters Of Habit

A friend of mine has just given up smoking, but instead eats large quantities of sweets. It seems that the smoking habit lies more in having something in the mouth than of enjoying a particular flavour. I wonder why this is.—M. D. L., Carlisle, Cumberland.

"The desire for something in the mouth is basically a hangover from infancy," says a doctor.

"Smoking is more difficult to give up because it is closer to this instinct than is sweet eating. Also, one's 'tolerance' of nicotine keeps increasing, and with it the number of cigarettes smoked. This helps to make the habit harder to break."

Knowing The Rules

Your weekly feature, "Spot the Lawbreaker," has reminded us of our ignorance of the many obscure laws which apparently exist. If a person were summonsed for breaking one of these laws, ignorance would not be an acceptable plea, but where can an ordinary member of the public read them up?—E. F. A. BRADFIELD, Franklin Road, Oxford.

"Our laws all boil down to common sense and consideration for others," says a lawyer. "If you do anything which is even likely to injure your neighbour or be a nuisance, then your common sense should tell you that there is a law about it.

"The statute law of England can be found in the thirty-five volumes of Halsbury's 'Law of England,' and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Guinness! THAT'S JUST WHAT THIS MEAL WAS NEEDING

WHEN YOU COME to a cosy-looking pub, especially if it has an attractive garden, improve the shining hour by having a glass of creamy Guinness. It tastes so welcome after a long walk, or a tiring day, and nothing is half so good with those pub snacks as the clean refreshing tang of this delicious drink.

You'll realise how right you were to choose Guinness when you set off again with new strength; with a healthy, happy sense of well-being which is part of the magic of Guinness. Nothing else gives you quite the same pleasurable invigoration. And why? Because Guinness is goodness through and through. Malted barley, hops and yeast make Guinness wholesome, beneficial, *natural*. Nothing is added. Nothing is taken away. Every drop you drink is *the real thing*. You'll be glad you learnt to appreciate it. **It's the appetising taste of Guinness that goes so well with meals.**

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Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

that practised in magistrates' courts in the two volumes of 'Stone's Justices' Manual.'

"Many laws concern particular industries and trades, and it is the duty of all engaged in them to acquaint themselves with the laws and regulations affecting them."

The Snag

After completing National Service as an n.c.o. in the R.A.F. police, and being interested in police work, I had hoped to join one of the colonial police forces.

I have applied for all vacancies advertised, and although I have all

the qualifications, and some police experience, I cannot realize my ambition. The reason is that all these police forces insist on single men—but I am married.—G. C., Kilsyth, Glasgow.

"Colonial territories make their own rules for police recruitment," says the Colonial Office. "But it is broadly true that they insist on single men. This is because for about the first three years of their tour, they would be under training and in barrack accommodation, which is unsuitable for married quarters. Also, most colonial forces like their young members to be very mobile."

Nurse Shortage

Provided that a person is of average intelligence and is medically fit, there is little difficulty in becoming a nurse in a mental hospital ("Free Speech," August 4). The shortage of staff in these hospitals is acute.—W. S. Howard, Dartford, Kent.

"The number of men and women student nurses in mental hospitals is at last increasing," says the Ministry of Health. "But several thousand more are certainly needed."

Harder In Fact

While I don't begrudge John Iles, the driving instructor in "The Man Who Wasn't Scared" (John Bull, August 4), his escape with his life at his trial for murder, I don't think things would have been so easy for him in real life.

In his brilliant prosecution at the Haigh trial, Sir Hartley Shawcross established that justice is not concerned with the individual delusions of a criminal as long as he knew that he was acting against the law. John Iles, by trying to run away from the police who gave chase, convicted himself of having consciously broken the law, even if he, in his own mind, considered his private road safety campaign justified.—George A. Floris, Albany Street, London, N.W.1.

Classics In Pictures

I think there is a case for pictorial versions of classical books ("Free Speech," August 11). No sensible person would dispute the bad effect of mass-produced "horror" comics on schoolchildren, but well-produced pictorial versions of literary classics can be of great value to the many retarded readers and non-readers in our schools today. For through these books they can be introduced to better literature than would otherwise be possible.—Stanley J. Neilly, East Barnet, Hertfordshire.

Face Saving

I enjoyed your serial, *Shadow Of The Moon*, but the painting in the last instalment (John Bull, August 4) showed Winter wearing lipstick. Surely not in 1856.—F. A., Gloucestershire.

Cosmetics have been used by English women at least since the Crusades, when they were introduced from the East. They were banned under Cromwell, but revived and became so popular by 1770 that a law was passed to prevent women using cosmetics to trap men into marriage. Cosmetics are known to have been used in Egypt as early as 3,500 B.C. The Bible hints at them in its reference to Jezebel having "painted her face."

Unnatural Hazard

It was beginning to get dark and my husband was locking up for the night when he heard a metallic "clink, clink" in the woods behind the house. He took a torch and went to investigate, and found a hedgehog with its head stuck fast in a narrow sweet-tin, which my young nephew must have dropped the previous day. After a quick wrench the tin came off, the wrapped sweets still inside. My husband unwrapped them and put them down beside the hedgehog, which seemed none the worse for its experience. In the morning the hedgehog had disappeared—and so had the sweets.—Mrs. M. A. Singer, Hillhead, Kintare, Aberdeen.

Too Sad

Too much protection of children from sadness may be bad ("Free Speech," August 4), but there was certainly too little a generation or two ago. I can still recall progressing, in recitations at school, from "The Child's First Grief" in the lowest class to Gray's *Elegy* in the highest. And the verse of a hymn of those days ran:

I should like to die, said Willy,
If my papa could die, too,
But he says he isn't ready
For he has so much to do.

Thank goodness our children are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

THE COVER

Sixth formers are the most austere of men. Not for them the idle follies of the junior school. So many things are beneath their dignity. Girls, for instance. But the young charmers in Petts's cover (the one on the left is his daughter) know that even a prefect can thaw out on that long, watched walk past the girls' school. And, after all, summer exams are over now and that proud new Colours blazer is official honour enough for this year. . . . Yes, why not? Use your power, man. Yell for a fag to deliver an invitation to one of those sirens. But which one?

Malcolm MacDonald — Borneo People

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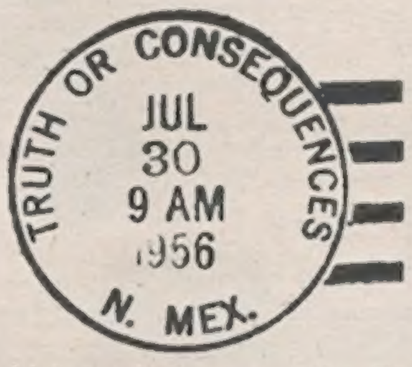
Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

spared such morbid preparation for life. — F. J. VERRIER, Gladesmore Road, London, N.15.

Made Its Mark

I collect unusual postmarks and in twenty-six years have amassed ten thousand of them. But case-hardened as I am to the oddities of the world's place names, I was surprised at this



one which reached me recently. Truth Or Consequences is a place in New Mexico, United States. It was formerly known as Hot Springs and has a population of about 4,500.—R. K. FORSTER, Scarborough.

Unpopular Names

As one of those people who heartily dislike their first christian name, I can quite understand why some people prefer to use their second ("Free Speech," August 18). Unfortunately, we are given our baptismal names before being able to utter a word of protest. For many years I have *forgotten* to use my first name except when I have to use it through sheer necessity. — MISS ANNIE CHRISTINE ALLEN, Edinburgh, 8.

Fortune Seekers

Several times in the past few weeks young men have told me they are emigrating. They are unanimous in believing that Britain holds no future for them.

We must be losing many of our younger people at a time when we can ill-afford the loss. But what can be said in favour of remaining here, in the face of the opportunities offered by the younger countries? There seems to be no logical argument likely to persuade them to stay—just appeals to patriotism and sentiment, which are really only selfish.—J. F. B., Birmingham, 14.

Last year, 30,150 people emigrated from Britain to Canada and 25,600 to Australia. Both countries report that an increasing proportion of immigrants are young men.

Bean Puzzle

Our family has been involved in a long argument about your correspondent's view, supported by that of your expert ("Free Speech," August 11), that runner beans grow in a clockwise direction.

Finally, I have managed to convince everybody that, from the seed's point of view—looking up from the ground—the plant does grow clockwise. But to a gardener looking down off the plant it would seem to be anti-clockwise.—R. G., Bucks.

Blood Money

I have just returned from a holiday in Norway, where I hitch-hiked from Stavanger to Oslo. But I spent too much time and money during the first half of the journey and I was almost destitute by the time I had reached Arendal, about two hundred miles from Oslo.

Here I was told that blood donations were paid for. So I hurried to the local hospital and gave a litre. For this I was paid the equivalent of £2—enough to see me through.—J. E. CARTER, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Similar payments are made to blood donors in Sweden and Western Germany. In the United States the system varies: in some cities it is voluntary, with payment being made only during emergency drives; in others, payment is always made.

Living Storm

Harry Hopkins's article, "The Winged Invaders" (JOHN BULL, August 11), took me back twenty-five years, to when I served in the army in Upper Burma. I saw a huge swarm of locusts arrive without warning. The experience was uncanny. The locusts settled everywhere, and very soon the lamp standards and trees were covered to such an extent that they became grotesque, writhing masses. The road was inches deep with them.—A. W. JARVIS, Lichfield, Staffs.

Making Way

I am a former superintendent in the London Fire Brigade and, during nearly thirty years with them, I never experienced one case of a motorist failing to give way to a fire engine on the road ("Free Speech," August 11)—provided that he heard the bell.

Before the war, London experimented with sirens. These undoubtedly had a greater range than bells, but for various reasons the scheme was dropped.—G. BENNISON, Lancing, Sussex.

. . . I know at least one American city (population 40,000) where all traffic lights in any of the four fire precincts can be controlled from the fire station. In an emergency the switch is thrown and all the lights turn to red. The fire engine is the only vehicle allowed to jump the lights.—DONALD SMITH, Ringwood, Hants.

Dispossessed Snails

While repairing a loose stone about ten feet from the ground, I found behind it quite a colony of snails, which I threw down on to the garden path for the birds to eat.

I cemented the stone in place, but the next morning I was astonished to find half a dozen of the snails stuck to it. I threw them away again, but

once more some had found their way back by the next day. They must have travelled at least twenty yards.—T. G. MITCHELL, Torrington.

"Snails have a homing instinct," says a naturalist. "In one experiment they crossed a wide road and climbed a wall to return to the place from which they had been removed. Snails' speeds vary according to their size, but an average one will travel a mile in sixteen days fourteen hours."

Matured Certificates

National Savings Certificates are a good investment for those who can save a little, but I hear that when they mature the interest decreases. If so, people will be encouraged to cash them and reinvest the cash in the new tenth issue, with profit. Surely this does not help the National Savings campaign very much.—MRS. O. G., Lincoln.

"It is true that certificates go on earning interest at a lower rate," says the National Savings Committee, "But it is not always advisable to cash those of past issues, because holdings in new issues are limited—the latest, the tenth, to six hundred units. And once cashed, certificates in previous issues cannot be repurchased in those issues. In case of doubt, it is always best to consult a bank manager or the local savings committee."

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

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Britain's unorthodox diplomat begins his story of adventure among the head-hunters

BORNEO PEOPLE

by Malcolm MacDonald

WILD pigs, mouse-deer, leopard cats, bears, pythons, rhinoceroses and many interesting beasts live in the jungle of Sarawak, a state within the island of Borneo which lies across the equator.

The varieties of small, furry animals include flying squirrels, flying foxes, flying lizards and even flying frogs. In the treetops other aero-acrobats disport themselves. Monkeys galore swing and leap from branch to branch like troupes of trapezists. Among the apes are renowned monsters found only in Borneo and Sumatra—the orang-utans or "men of the trees." Short-legged and long-armed, with massive torsos covered with brick-red hair, they contemplate you with melancholy eyes, as if they had just read Darwin's *Origin Of Species* and were painfully aware of being your poor relations who have not done so well in life.

Up the rivers lurk crocodiles, and bird life is plentiful. Sunbirds, flower-peckers, bulbuls, fly-catchers, trogons, drongoes, parrots, bee-eaters, kingfishers, goatsuckers, kites, parakeets and hundreds of other species inhabit the swamps

The picture that caused a sensation : on arrival at an Iban village, MacDonald is escorted by the daughters of a head-hunter chief

and forests. Sarawak is the home of a splendid menagerie, and among the beasts, fish and birds lives that astonishing species, *homo sapiens* —Man.

The most interesting fact about human society in Sarawak is that much of it has scarcely changed for centuries. The pagans still live under much the same conditions as when they arrived as immigrants several hundred years ago. Indeed, the simplest among them are men near the dawn of history, examples of primitive man. Sarawak is an anthropologist's dream.

The pagan Ibans, or Sea Dyaks, are some of the real "wild men of Borneo." One of my first contacts with them was when I visited Sarawak shortly after the war. Dennis White, the Secretary for Native Affairs, and I went 180 miles up the Rejang River to Kapit.

We arrived at teatime, stepped ashore and climbed a path to Fort Sylvia, the local stronghold. At the end of the war, Kapit was the scene of vicious fighting. Ibans assaulted it with murderous gusto; the Japanese resisted with obstinate courage.

We met grim evidence of the recent battle. The Ibans had raised a flamboyant arch of welcome, decorated as always with palm fronds, orchids and other bright tropical blooms. Its principal adornments, however, were more unusual. They were two Japanese heads. Already one was almost a bare skull, but on the other scraps of flesh still clung to the bone. The cropped black hair of a soldier sprouted from its pate, and eye-lashes grew in withered eyelids half closed over lack-lustre eyes. For the rest, little of the countenance remained.

The first man to receive us was the redoubtable Temonggong Koh, the paramount chief of the local Ibans and the most important pagan in Sarawak. Though age had sunk his flesh upon its bone structure, his features still expressed lively qualities. His eyes were crafty yet kindly; his nose showed pugnacity; his mouth was sensuous and generous, and his jaw indicated great firmness of will.

Apart from his distinguished countenance, his most notable physical attributes were the backs of his hands. From the wrists to the fingernails they were completely blue, as if they had been washed in ink. The decoration had honourable significance, being a sign of a mighty head-hunter. In olden days when a man took a head

When MacDonald toured Simanggang, he was given a bodyguard of young warriors. "They were dressed to kill," he says

he earned the right to have one joint of one finger tattooed. With each additional head to his credit another joint was pricked and dyed. Koh's hands were completely covered.

Head-hunting used to be a national sport pursued passionately by most of the pagan tribes. The resultant battles were not conspicuously heroic or honourable affairs. A victory gained by low cunning was as praiseworthy as one secured by noble prowess. An attack from behind an opponent was generally regarded as better, because more likely to succeed, than a frontal assault; and the head of a defenceless old woman was as triumphant a capture as that of a vigorous young brave.

The heyday of head-hunting passed when white settlers in Sarawak began their gradual pacification of the natives. Then came the period of misgovernment by the Japanese, followed by the beginning of British colonial rule.

During the Japanese occupation Koh remained secretly loyal to Britain. Many a Japanese soldier who strayed along a forest path never returned to camp. At some lonely spot he would suddenly stumble and fall. A small, wispish object flying through the sunlight and shadow had struck him. Whence had it come? What could it be? He discovered a dart embedded in his flesh, like a porcupine's quill. It was a poisoned arrow from a blow-pipe. How sleepy it made him feel as he lay helpless on the ground! The fatal juice of the Ipoh tree was doing its work.

Something stirred in the bushes nearby. A head-hunter stepped from his hiding-place. Stealthily he moved to the prostrate body, laid his blow-pipe on the grass and drew his parang from its sheath. With a single stroke of its blade he claimed his prize—and the number of Japanese heads taken was increased by one.

When a marksman thus bagged his quarry he took it home and hung it in his house, just as other big-game hunters do. I am told that the most valued possession in one Iban mansion is the head of a Director of Artistic Endeavour in the Imperial Army of Occupation in Borneo. He was a man of earnest, student-like appearance, with gold-rimmed spectacles. It is said that the glasses still perch on what is left of his nose, and that each day the headman removes them, gives them a polish, and solemnly puts them back.

Now British government has returned, and the Ibans are once more reformed characters.

That afternoon at Kapit, Koh introduced me to his subordinate colleagues, men assembled from long-houses for scores of miles around.

Koh led us to a long row of mats laid on the ground. On these were spread many scores of small plates piled with native foods, and dozens of bottles of home-made tuak wine. We were invited to squat cross-legged on the grass.

I sat in the centre, with Koh beside me and Dennis White close by to act as interpreter. Then a group of Iban maidens stepped forward, one female kneeling opposite each guest to attend

At a head-hunters' feast, MacDonald is waited upon by Iban maidens. But first he had to appease good and evil spirits

MacDonald often stayed with Ibans in the Rejang River area. On Mount Senggi he saw a Land Dyak village

upon him during the ceremony, much as a geisha girl would do in a Japanese tea-house.

I was honoured by having more than my fair share of hand-maidens, for two waited upon me. Both were daughters of Temonggong Koh. During his eventful life he had acquired four successive wives, four daughters and two sons. The pair at Kapit that day were his two youngest, Mindun and Segura.

Mindun was a smiling, vivacious female, over twenty years old and already married. Segura was a child of about thirteen. Both had charming looks and figures, but Segura was especially engaging. With an angelic face, golden brown skin, small virginal breasts and elegant young limbs, she was an exquisite creature.

When she overcame her first awe of me she grew extraordinarily friendly, sitting at my side and chattering gaily in her mother tongue, regardless of the fact that I did not understand a word. At any humorous event her eyes twinkled and she broke into happy laughter.

The mat on which we sat was littered with plates of food and bottles of drink, but none of the delicacies spread before us was for human consumption. We would offer them to the good and evil spirits, to appease the local hobgoblins who might otherwise resort to malicious interference with our evening's entertainment.

The pagans' whole life is governed by a desire to be on correct terms with the spirits, to appease the bad ones and gain the friendship of the good. To achieve this they conform to a well-established code of social conduct, religiously observing various taboos and performing certain propitiatory acts. One of these deeds is the periodic refreshment of the deities and demons with food and drink, and their preparation is accompanied by a solemn ceremonial called the bedara.

As a preliminary, Koh asked me to stretch out one arm. I did so, and round my wrist he fitted a rough copper bracelet. This was an introductory gesture of friendship, an initiation into the good-fellowship of the Ibans of the Rejang River. The old chief then placed a large plate before me and he, Mindun and Segura instructed me in rites to gain the benevolence of the hobgoblins.

Twenty-seven saucers were arranged in four rows on the mat before me, each piled with some native delicacy. I was to take samples from each, and place them on the large plate.

When I had gathered bits of the contents of every saucer, Mindun produced a dish of hens' eggs. She asked me to balance four of them perpendicularly on top of the mound. So poised, they made the concoction look like a fantastic creation by a lunatic conjurer. Finally, Mindun handed me a tiny cup of tuak, which I placed between the quartette of eggs.

Then a chief appeared, carrying a live cock, upside-down, by its feet. On Koh's instructions I took the fowl and waved it, still in reverse, above the plate of food. As I did so I muttered Bornean blessings on my friends.

When I restored the cock to the chief, he took it away, slew it, and returned with some feathers plucked from its tail. They had been dipped in its blood and had thereby acquired special virtue. Koh, Mindun and Segura stretched out their hands to stroke the quills where they were bloody, to be imbued themselves with a share of that virtue. Then I stuck the plumes like triumphant flags on the peak of the mountain of food before me. The dish was ready for the spirits.

Behind us several bamboo poles had been planted in the ground. The topmost section of each was cut into half a dozen splinters, splayed outwards like the fingers of a wooden hand. At Koh's prompting, I fixed the dish in one of those bamboo clasps, where I was advised the spirits would enjoy it.

Having thus dealt with the edibles, we now turned to the drinks. First of all Mindun poured a mouthful of tuak into a tumbler and handed it to me. Koh signalled that I should sprinkle it on the ground behind my back, and White whispered in explanation that the goblins would notice it there and gratefully slake their thirsts. That was all that the spirits ever got. The rest we dealt with ourselves.

I handed the empty tumbler back to Mindun and now she filled it to the brim. The drink was for me. Holding the glass before me she started to sing a pantun—a pagan chant.

Then Segura filled a glass for me, and we went through the same exercise. She sang a pantun sweetly, and her childish grin as she invited me to drink was such that I needed no compulsion. Simultaneously every other guest at the party

Continued on page 32

Temonggong Koh, "the most important pagan in Sarawak," with his daughters Mindun (left) and Segura. When an Iban warrior captured a head, a finger-joint was tattooed. Koh had so big a score that his hands were completely covered

He was a Guards officer, and his moustache bristled with formality. Now they pour water over him, and he likes it

Peter Haigh wins TV fame— by relaxing

by JOHN ENNIS

Peggy Cummins and Haigh meet at Lime Grove for the television programme *Picture Parade*

Audiences should only see the top: but once the cameras caught Haigh out

A FEW weeks ago Peter Haigh, who describes himself as a "televisor," took Kim Novak, the Hollywood star, on a tour of London. He took her to Lord's, where his favourite game of cricket left her bewildered. They went on to lunch in a City pub, then visited the Tower. Returning, their car passed Wellington Barracks, where the Guards were on parade. "Stop the car," the film star demanded.

It was a hot day, and they had been out for six hours. Miss Novak's feet were hot, so she left her shoes in the car. Barefoot, she stood beside Haigh on the pavement, and commented loudly on the scene. "Gee, aren't they pretty," she said, and "Say, look at that cute guy over there," pointing to a resplendent Guards officer.

Haigh, who almost always wears club ties, was relieved to notice that his neckwear that day blazoned his connection with a cricket club, and not with the Brigade of Guards, for he had held the rank of captain in the Welsh Guards.

"I was secretly glad, too, that my old commanding officer was not present." Miss Novak never suspected his uneasiness, and in fact Haigh found his predicament amusing.

His victory in the struggle to unbend to exactly the right degree has put Haigh, at thirty-one, among the best-known personalities in Britain. For four years he appeared with increasing frequency on B.B.C. television as an announcer. "All that time I was a guest announcer—like the man who came to dinner," he says. "I was in for a week and out for two."

He could have ended this uncertain arrangement at the beginning of this year when he was offered a two-year contract as senior male announcer to the B.B.C. Television Service, in place of MacDonald Hobley, who had resigned. He refused, and in six months he has earned twice the money he would have earned from the contract by appearing regularly, as a freelance announcer or interviewer, in *Picture Parade*, *Top Town* and *Next Week's Calls*.

When he first began announcing, a critic wrote, "Peter Haigh always makes me feel I haven't paid my licence." His Brigade of Guards demeanour and his moustache were both a little too bristling.

Before he could make himself welcome in

Haigh worked in India for a tobacco company for a year. He failed to master the local language and its fifty-two letter alphabet

Television announcer Pauline Tooth has the mysteries of the pin-table explained to her by Haigh at his local in St. John's Wood

Casual and relaxed, Haigh brings out the best in personalities he interviews, like Marilyn Monroe and Sir Laurence Olivier

every living-room, Haigh had many cramping influences to overcome. At his boarding school near London he left the impression of being neat and tidy, did not shine particularly in games or work, and got his School Certificate after three tries at the mathematics paper.

At eighteen he kept an appointment with a Guards colonel, a forbidding figure with a glass eye. "Can you manage a private income of £100 a year?" the colonel asked.

Haigh said he thought he might manage £75. Then the colonel asked him to turn around. "Presumably he liked the cut of the jib," says Haigh. "He accepted me."

Yet Haigh has always been kicking free of his conventional bonds. He took commercial art training before joining the Guards, and remembers shuffling red-faced into a room where a nude model awaited his first attempt at drawing from life.

In television Haigh has found irreverent people who have forced him into situations that no Guards officer was ever intended to face. Due to make the opening announcement on *Whirligig*, the children's programme run by Humphrey Lestocq, Haigh agreed to allow Lestocq to pour water over his head after the announcement.

He wore a sports coat, shirt and tie borrowed from the B.B.C. wardrobe. Below, out of camera range, he wore bathing trunks and a towel knotted around his waist. The water fell on his head, followed by the tin basin that had held the water. Then, as had been previously arranged without his knowledge, the camera panned down to show his bare legs which, he says, "are prone to bandiness."

Haigh landed his first broadcasting job by chance. In Palestine with his regiment after the war, he met Leslie Knight, chief broadcasting officer in the Middle East, at a party. He told Knight he would like to try broadcasting. Next day Knight gave him a microphone test, and took him on.

Haigh went first to Benghazi, then to Mombasa. One day, when he was due to open the day's programmes in Mombasa at 6.30 a.m., his alarm clock failed him. He dashed to the microphone, put the first record on the turntable, switched on and said, "I'm terribly sorry I'm late. The time is seventeen minutes to seven and the date. . . ." But he had forgotten the date, and he had to apologize again.

Back in England in 1949, Haigh went confidently to the B.B.C. A listening board gave him a test and failed him. A woman on the board, a speech therapist, told him that his voice was too nasal, his accent too Oxford, and added the insurmountable disqualification, "You don't have the right make-up." The board hinted that he would be wasting his time returning for another test, but softened the blow by adding, "Television might take you."

Television did not, and Haigh joined the British-American Tobacco Company. He trained for eight months, then went to Parchoor, in India. He tried, but failed, to learn the local language, which had fifty-two letters in the alphabet. After a year, still nursing broadcasting ambitions, he resigned.

Back in England, he tried, then resigned from, jobs selling films and tiles. "By January 1, 1952, I was a freelance," he says, "though I don't know what at." But soon he was given a weekly programme to edit for Radio Luxembourg, for £40 a month.

Then Clive Rawes, B.B.C. Television presentation editor, gave Haigh a test. Rawes had no reserve announcers, and he was testing everybody remotely possible. The test was sufficiently good for Rawes to tell Haigh to attach himself to MacDonald Hobley so as to get the feel of things.

Haigh watched Hobley make announcements, then repeated them to a dead camera. He got used to the sound of his own voice in the studio. When he was ready, he took a second test. He had improved noticeably, and he did another test on a closed circuit; this was filmed and shown to Cecil McGivern, Controller of Television. Then he was given the trial as guest announcer that lasted for four years.

"He has an extremely conscientious, professional approach," says Rawes. "Producers began asking for him because he would arrive half an hour early for rehearsals to see what he could do to help, even if it was only getting the tea or taking a nervous person to lunch." In four years his pay for announcing grew from £10 to £23 a week.

HAIGH remembers his first appearance, on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1952. Mary Malcolm interrupted a holiday to introduce him.

"I knew my announcement parrot fashion and I spoke it like a clerk of a court reading an indictment. Next day nobody said a word. You have to force criticism out of the B.B.C."

His greatest impact on viewers came two years later. In September, 1954, Haigh was chosen to put over a one-man road safety campaign. Every night for a week he solemnly read out details of mangling and fatal accidents on the roads, then stared grimly into the camera and said, "Hundreds of you now watching will be killed or injured tomorrow."

For a few days he was the most unpopular man in Britain. The lasting effect was to make him one of the best-known personalities.

About this time, feeling the need for criticism, Haigh sought out Clive Rawes. "He told me he thought I was getting too professional, too slick, and I knew that what he meant was a bit too cocky," says Haigh. "I went away and tried to become more relaxed and casual. I had been getting too rehearsed, a bit of a smart alec."

In spite of his professional approach, Haigh has made most of the small errors that add to the viewers' gaiety. He has a trick of thinking a few lines ahead of what he is saying, and on one occasion he thought too far ahead in a complicated announcement and dried up in the middle of a sentence. He avoids using the teleprompter (known as the Idiot Sheet) in case it should make him lazy and insincere.

Haigh has learned a few tricks that make his appearances on viewers' screens more acceptable. He tries to avoid phrases such as "many of you . . . some of you," on the grounds that a television announcer is always talking to only one person. When facing the camera he tries to make minute eye movements to look at different parts of the lens, hoping in this way to take in people sitting in all parts of a room.

He has discovered that people hang on his words. In a recent edition of *Picture Parade* he was told by Joan Collins, the film star, that she was about to leave for filming in Jamaica. "I have a wonderful recipe for a deep, quick tan," he told her. Then, quickly realizing that to give the recipe would involve advertising, he added, "I'll tell you afterwards."

Hundreds of viewers wrote asking for the secret. It is, in fact, a proprietary baby oil mixed with one teaspoonful of iodine.

An acquaintance who recently saw Haigh smothered in this concoction while sunning himself on the roof of his block of flats in St. John's Wood, says, "If Miss Collins has taken his advice, she will be the stickiest young woman in Jamaica." THE END

GOOD!

good to eat and good for you

Cadbury's Chocolate Biscuits are delicious—and they're GOOD! There's goodness in the biscuit centres: there's extra goodness in the Cadbury's 'Dairy Milk' Chocolate: there's goodness through and through!

Good to eat

Cadbury's Chocolate Biscuits are a ready-to-serve feast at any time. And everyone loves them. Just bring out a packet and the whole family shout "GOOD! Cadbury's Chocolate Biscuits!"

Cadbury's Chocolate Biscuits

COVERED WITH CADBURY'S DAIRY MILK CHOCOLATE

MILK WAFER
½lb.—2'1

MILK FINGER
½lb.—2'1

MILK ASSORTED
½lb.—2'-

Reading beats the clock

by KEITH ELLIS

It pays business executives to go back to school—where they learn to read at twice their normal speed

On the screen pacer, pupils waste no time re-reading words already passed

COMMANDER GERALD AFFLECK-GRAVES is an affable forty-six year old ex-naval signals officer who spends his time teaching people how to read faster. As principal of London's Quick Reading Centre he believes that most people read far more slowly than they need. "We stop learning how to read at the age of six," he says.

In business, the consequent waste of time is serious. He claims that the typical executive reads a minimum of 150 business letters (incoming, outgoing and file copies), sixty memoranda, twenty reports, five daily papers, two Sunday papers, four trade journals and two periodicals every week. These total around 250,000 words. The daily average of about 50,000 words is equivalent to a short novel.

Many commercial firms have begun to realize how much time could be saved by faster reading. Among those who have hired Graves and his two assistants to teach their executives and technicians are Rockware Glass, Crawford's Biscuits, British Petroleum and Guinness. Joseph Lucas, Ltd., Leyland Motors and I.C.I. have organized courses of their own. Last year, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research sponsored research on quick reading at London's North-Western Polytechnic, and the polytechnic itself now offers classes.

In the standard class of seven, Graves claims that he can, on average, double the speed of reading. Individual results vary. One of his worst pupils, a man of thirty-six, jumped from 260 words a minute to 400 on both difficult and easier material. One of his best improved from 190 to 430 on difficult material and from 250 to 550 on the easier.

What takes up the time in reading is the number of stops made by the eyes. Most people stop at every word. To show that this is unnecessary, Graves uses a machine called a flashmeter which lights up for periods of 1/10th to 1/100th of a second cards printed with inscriptions ranging from five-digit numbers to sentences of half a dozen words. Pupils find that with practice they can read instantaneously a phrase of three, four or even more words.

"When you're listening to someone speak," says Graves, "you don't concentrate on the individual words. It should be the same with a piece of writing. You should look at it almost as you would look at a picture."

Another time-wasting fault is going back to re-read what has already been read. The cure for this is a gadget called a pacer, which slides an opaque shutter down the page as the pupil reads. By speeding up the pacer, Graves can also force his pupil to read faster.

The core of each lesson is the timed reading of two set passages. The easier is a non-fiction story, perhaps a biographical anecdote. The more difficult is a highly factual semi-technical piece in an awkward style. To make sure they understand what they are reading, pupils answer ten questions on each passage. The pass mark is seven. "We don't suggest that's enough for a highly important paper. It's just a working standard."

Between them, the exercises eliminate two more common faults. When the pupil is reading really fast, he is no longer able to mouth the words, either consciously or sub-consciously. Also, when he sees he can answer most of the questions, he gains confidence, the lack of which is often a hindrance to fast reading.

"If you read faster," says Graves, "you understand more, not less. You're reading words in groups and the meaning is easier to understand. It's like a jigsaw puzzle. It's much easier to assemble a few large pieces than many small ones."

Graves believes that a reader should spend no more time on a paper than is necessary to derive what he wants from it, and stresses the need of finding out what a piece is about before he starts to read. This can be done by glancing down the table of contents, by an intelligent assessment of headlines or crossheads and, in official documents, by reading the first and last paragraphs and the first sentences of the paragraphs in between. He also teaches his pupils how to skim.

The Quick Reading Centre is sponsored by the engineering firm of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons. One of the directors had been impressed by the work of the Reading Laboratory Inc., one of the many American quick-reading organizations. He had a number of his executives taught by an American instructor and then set up the centre, which uses the laboratory's methods and materials, on which it pays royalties.

The fee for a course of fourteen ninety-minute sessions is fifty guineas and for seven-pupil group courses £500. The North-Western Polytechnic offers a course based on the American Harvard system, which follows the same broad principles but places more emphasis on comprehension and evaluation. The fee is one guinea.

The main reason for the difference is the individual tuition given by the centre. "Besides," says Graves with a wink, "the people who come to us are too busy and important to go to evening classes." THE END

"Have you ever in your life seen a more beautiful girl?" asked Sam in a dazed voice. "Yes," I said, "often!"

AMNESIA FOR TWO

If this man was Sam, he was Thérèse's husband. I had to be quite sure before I condemned him to that

by ROBERT STANDISH

IN the early summer of 1936 I received word that an aunt, whom I knew but slightly, had died in France, and that she had willed me her house in the hills behind the French Riviera. The news reached me in New York a few days before I was due to sail for Europe in the old Berengaria.

The sailing day, not that it has the least importance, was July 2. I am tempted to be precise about this because I wish to emphasize that it was on this sailing day, in the small midships bar, that I met Sam Bolton for the first time in my life. It has been alleged on more than one occasion that Sam and I were old friends long before this date. If this were true—and I most solemnly affirm that it is not—Thérèse might have some justification for the unpleasant things she has said about me. But this is getting ahead of my story.

Sam and I seemed to like each other on sight. We had a couple of drinks together before going down for lunch, and arranged to sit at the same table. I had some business in London, after which I planned to go down to the French Riviera to look at the house I had inherited. Sam, who was at a loose end, fell in with my plans eagerly, with the result that in London we bought a small car for the drive across France.

We drove southwards out of Calais in the early afternoon of a blazing July day and around six o'clock entered the market place of a small Normandy town whose name, if I ever knew it, I have forgotten. At the far end of the *place*, seen through a green tunnel of plane trees, was a pleasant-looking hotel called the Grand Cerf.

On the outskirts of the town we had passed an even more pleasant-seeming hotel called the Cheval Blanc. Just why we did not stop there, I don't know, but it is unimportant decisions of this nature which so often govern our lives.

It was the apéritif hour when Sam and I, bathed and changed, found a vacant table in the space reserved for the hotel under the plane trees. We ordered our drinks while waiting for dinner, but I noticed that Sam had grown unaccountably silent. I don't think he saw me: his eyes were fixed on a spot over my shoulder.

"Have you ever in your life seen a more beautiful girl?" said Sam at length in a dazed, awestruck voice.

I looked in the direction indicated.

"Yes, often!" I replied tersely. "There are half a dozen better-looking girls sitting around these tables right now."

At Sam's insistence I moved my chair in order to get a better view of this vision of loveliness. She was a blonde, tallish, with quite good features. But she had cold bluish-green eyes, set too close together. She was evidently the daughter of the house, for in France supervisory jobs in small hotels and restaurants are seldom given to outsiders.

Then a poor wretch of a waiter made an error in a bill and I watched in sympathy while those bluish-green eyes crackled with fury and the unhappy man winced under the lash of her tongue.

But Sam Bolton couldn't or wouldn't see what I saw. Thérèse, for that was her name, seemed to have numbed his critical faculties. At dinner we sat even closer to her and I was forced to admit that she had beauty of a kind. But it was the kind I don't like, for there was no warmth in it.

I was seeing Thérèse in a characteristic pose. There was a subtle something about her which reminded me of Kreisler, Elman, Heifetz, or one of the other great instrumentalists. Her fingers played so lovingly over the instrument in front of her that one knew instinctively that here, engaged as she was, she was finding fulfilment. Her touch was a caress. But the instrument, instead of being a Stradivarius, was a cash-register.

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

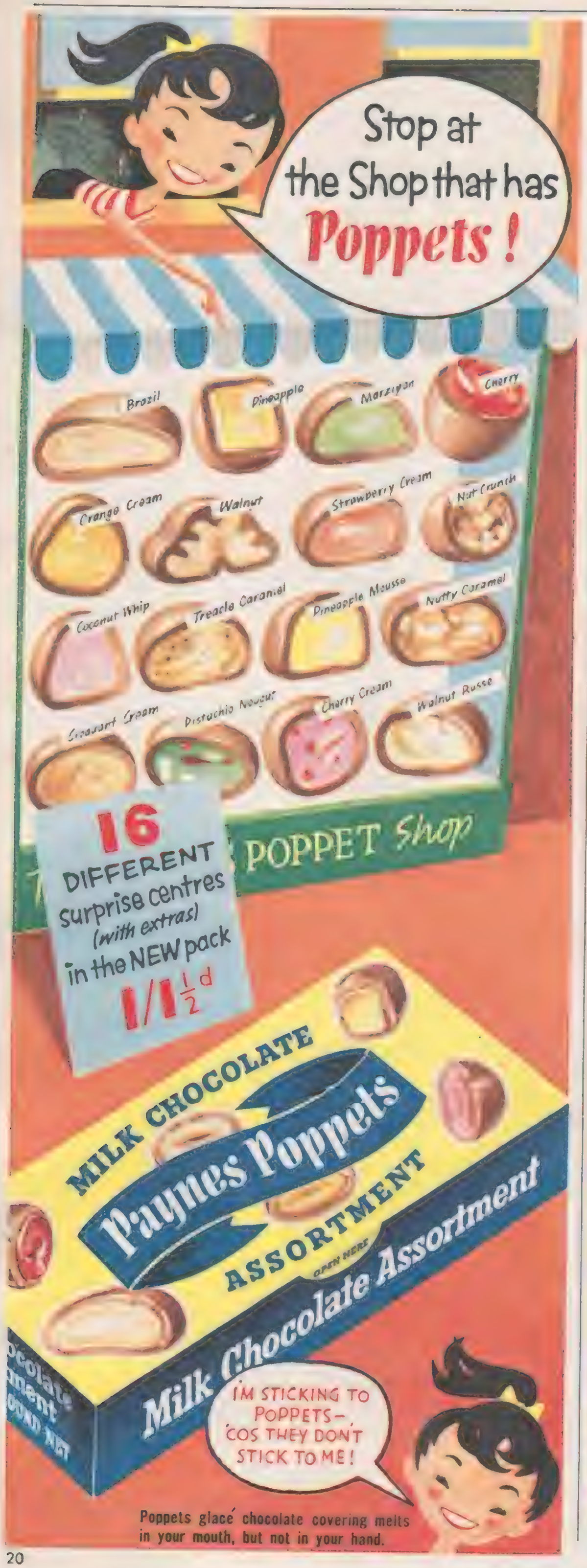
It was with the greatest difficulty that I persuaded Sam to continue the journey on the following morning. He was ready to stay indefinitely at the Grand Cerf. This, he assured me, was no passing infatuation. He was, and for the first time in his life, deeply in love. Did I think he stood a chance?

"I don't know, Sam," I was forced to reply. "I haven't seen your bank balance."

The coolness engendered by this lasted a couple of hundred miles. . . .

My Aunt Violet's house was a true Provençal

Sam wandered up wearing one of my bath robes. At first he seemed quite amiable



CARPETS MAKE A HOME

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you'll be glad you bought the new carpet

She was a yelling tomboy, then a difficult "in-between". Now, with a room of her own, freshly carpeted to give that important sense of grown-up comfort and elegance, she is happier . . . more assured . . . and very grateful. When buying a carpet, look for the label of the Federation of British Carpet Manufacturers. Then you can be *sure* you are getting the best value for your money.

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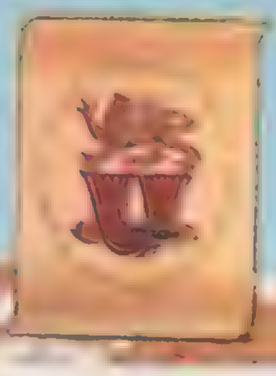
FREE *Colour-illustrated 24-page booklet, "How to choose and care for Carpets". Packed with useful information and advice. Send postcard today with your address to Carpet Information Dept. 4 Playhouse Yard, London, E.C.4*



BEST OF ALL – BUY AN ALL-WOOL CARPET

mas, built in the eighteenth century, with stone walls thirty inches thick. An olive grove, forty-odd acres in extent, went with the house. My aunt had spent a lot of money making and maintaining a gem of a Provençal garden and had expressed a desire that I should keep it up. Her trusted servant, Alphonsine, had remained on as caretaker, so that upon receipt of my telegram everything was ready for our arrival, even to some crisp cheese straws, fresh from the oven, which made their appearance with a bottle of cracking cold white wine.

There was a fine library, a well-stocked wine cellar, every vase was full of flowers and the newly cleaned swimming pool was being refilled.

Sam, as I already had cause to know, was a man of swift enthusiasms, but he amazed me that evening just before we went to bed by saying: "This is the kind of house I've always dreamed of, but never thought I would see . . . let alone live in. Do you want to sell it?"

"I don't think so," I replied, "but even if I did, what good would it be to you? You have your living to earn, like I have. Places like this aren't for young fellows like us . . . but it would be a wonderful place to retire to."

After rhapsodizing for some minutes, Sam concluded earnestly: "Promise me that if you ever decide to sell, you'll give me the first refusal."

I refused to promise because I didn't believe that his enthusiasm meant anything. I assumed that in another week he would have forgotten the house and Thérèse. But there I did less than justice to Sam.

Before leaving for the north I changed the name of the house. Hitherto it had been known by the name of the family which originally owned it. In gratitude to my Aunt Violet's memory I called it the Mas des Violettes. It was doubly appropriate, for there was a fine bed of long-stemmed violets.

NOTHING of note occurred on the northward drive until we came to the little Normandy town where Sam had seen Thérèse. Here—and I don't think Sam played any monkey tricks with the engine—we had a mechanical breakdown.

Sam spent the evening with Thérèse and on the following morning he tossed a bombshell into my lap. He intended to allow me to return to London alone as Thérèse and he were to be married as soon as the legal formalities could be completed. Would I return to be his best man?

"I'm sorry, Sam," I replied with real regret, for I knew that our brief friendship would not survive what I was going to say, "but if you are fool enough to go through with this thing you must do it without any help from me."

"What have you got against her?" Sam asked in a puzzled voice, for he was honestly unable to understand why I could not see her as he did.

"Since you ask me, Sam," I replied, "I don't like her rat-trap jaw. I don't like the sparks from those blue-green eyes of hers. I've seen more warmth in an iceberg, and it wouldn't surprise me to learn that she was given a cash register to play with in her cradle.

"She . . . she scares me, Sam. Look at the staff here. They all hate her and they are scared of her."

There was nothing more I could say or do. Indeed, I was conscious of having said too much already.

When I left the hotel the following morning, Sam let me go without a word. I was sorry, for I liked Sam.

A letter from Sam reached me three weeks later, mailed from Paris. It was to the effect that he and Thérèse were married and were going to the United States to live. He gave me the address of a small-town bank somewhere in Connecticut, of which he had previously told me his father was president. This conveyed little to me, for in 1936, towards the end of the depression, there were big city bank presidents who were not conspicuously rich. But any kind of bank president must have sounded good to Thérèse.

In late 1938 there was a letter from Sam, telling me briefly that his father was dead and that he and Thérèse were sailing shortly for France. They hoped to find and buy a property close to the French Riviera. Meanwhile, would I care to put a price on the Mas des Violettes. Alternatively, would I consider renting them the house while they looked around?

Although I had only visited the Mas des Violettes once since Sam and I had stayed there together, I was reluctant to sell. For a few hours I did contemplate renting the house to Sam, but the thought of Thérèse there, cracking the whip and ordering the gentle Alphonsine about, as I had seen her behaving to the hotel staff, was quite unthinkable. I was shocked when I realized how profoundly I disliked Thérèse, although I had never spoken to her.

I spent Christmas, 1938, at the Mas des Violettes and was embarrassed to learn on arrival that Sam and Thérèse had bought the adjoining property. Alphonsine told me that Thérèse had repeatedly demanded to be shown over the house, but that she had told her to obtain written authorization from me.

My house and La Bastide, which Sam and Thérèse had bought, occupied twin hilltops. The houses were, I would judge, 250 yards apart, but the acoustics were such that they might have been very much closer. It was quite evident within a few hours of my arrival that the honeymoon was over. The quarrels seemed incessant and her shrill vituperation, in a mixture of French and English, destroyed the peace. Often it continued far into the night.

I did not invite them to the house. Nor did they invite me. I think Sam had told Thérèse what I thought about her.

Sam, whom I met in the village, told me that his father had died a few months after he and Thérèse had arrived home with the intention of remaining there. Thérèse, however, had detested the life there and in turn was cordially disliked by all Sam's friends and relations.

On his father's death Sam took his share of the estate in cash—I gathered there wasn't much—and, at Thérèse's urgent insistence, returned with her to France. She had an uncle who was a speculative builder and she convinced Sam that with his help they would make a fortune.

Sam thereupon invested his entire capital in the property which adjoined my own. To be fair to Thérèse, the property was an excellent investment at the price paid, but the purchase left Sam without any ready money. He was dependent on Thérèse for the price of a packet of cigarettes.

"You were right," Sam told me. "All she really loves is money. Between ourselves, I can't take much more."

It did Sam good to talk and I encouraged him to blow off steam. We drove down to Nice and he decided to brave Thérèse's wrath by making an evening of it. Not that we did anything desperate. It was simply that she did not like Sam to come under any influence but her own; and I think, too, that she enjoyed the power which his penniless state gave her.

"Where I was a fool," Sam told me, "was in putting up my entire capital to buy the land and buying it in our joint names. She would rather die of starvation than sell until she makes a profit. She's a peasant at heart and the only two things in the world that have any value to her are land and money . . . hard cash."

THÉRÈSE had been too mean to install a telephone at the house, so there was no way of letting her know that Sam wasn't coming home to dinner.

"It's all very well," said Sam later that evening, "to tell me to take a strong line with her—but what with? She's got me cold. Her uncle, the speculative builder, is a crook, and I won't agree to any of his propositions. Thérèse's reply to that is to say she will block any effort of mine to realize any part of my capital. Half of it's hers and she's going to camp there until hell freezes over."

Poor Sam was in a bad spot. It was between eleven and midnight when I left him at his

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A great new novel by the brilliant author of "THE CRUEL SEA" . . .

NICHOLAS MONSARRAT

HE achieved fame with his best-selling epic of the ocean and a ship at war. . . . Now Monsarrat has written a new book, destined to be one of the year's greatest publishing successes—*The Tribe That Lost Its Head.* It is a dramatic and romantic story of intrigue and passion on an African island, and is

COMING SOON IN JOHN BULL

Knight supervises a final check of goods ready for shipment

Banshee's parcels cheer the tropics

by RENÉ LECLER

Reginald Knight's customers cable from all over the world to order anything from baby food to machine guns

A customer may have to rough it. Knight

An oil company executive, due on leave from his job in the Persian Gulf, asked Reginald Knight, manager of a firm of tropical outfitters, to get him an outboard motor-boat, a light two-seater aeroplane and an Australian sun bear "not more than three feet high." The motor boat gave Knight little trouble, and within a day he had located a Tiger Moth for sale. But, he says, "the Australian sun bear had me stumped."

Discovering that it fed only on eucalyptus leaves, he cabled: "Will you take other bear?" The customer replied: "Yes, if it's brown."

The London Zoo could not help and neither could three Continental zoos. Finally Knight spent an hour every day telephoning livestock firms all over the country. Two days before the customer was due to arrive, a pet shop a few streets away from his office replied: "Yes, we have a small brown bear."

Knight jumped into a taxi, bought the bear for £35 and took it back to his office. When the client arrived, he patted the bear and said: "Oh, good! My girl friend *will* be pleased."

For nearly a century "Try Baker's of Golden Square" has been a password among Britons away from home. Starting in a small way in India, F. P. Baker and Company, Limited, now has over three hundred lines of goods in its plain, unglamorous showrooms and sells, packs, ships and insures them to customers anywhere from Thailand to Peru, Singapore or Sierra Leone.

Seventy-four employees serve 157,000 mail order clients. Once a year, two Baker's catalogues go to lonely Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic. One also goes to a Saudi Arabian sheikh whose last order, for £2,000 worth of ladies' clothing, included thirty-six jumpers and twenty-four sets of underwear for the ladies of his harem.

In one week last December, Knight dispatched chestnuts for turkey stuffing in the Sudan, a case of apples to Israel, a month's supply of baby food to Kabul, Afghanistan, holly and mistletoe to Ethiopia, three dozen coffee filters to a Chinese millionaire in Singapore, and two fruit machines to a club in Kenya. As an afterthought, he remembered to have the slots altered to take Kenya coinage.

George Middleton, the firm's buyer, says, "If you can do the hard thing, the easy one takes care of itself. The man we supplied with a live bear won't forget we also sell tropical kit."

Sixty per cent of the firm's business is over-the-counter trade at its Golden Square showrooms. This covers Palm Beach suits, of which Knight sells about four thousand a year ranging from £7 to £20, mosquito boots, tents, camping equipment, including zinc-lined trunks, as well as ordinary household goods.

Knight, a bland, good-tempered Londoner of fifty-five tries hard to supply a man going to the tropics with the right kit to suit local living conditions. He keeps an up-to-date information file. A customer departing for some odd spot on the map takes with him a long and detailed form asking for facts about the weather, clothes, food, entertainment and transport.

Over the years the file has grown to cover almost every possible destination. Says Knight: "Every day I wait for a customer to tell me he is going to Timbuktu or the Cocos Islands so that I can add to the list."

Knight caters for B.O.A.C. staff, for whom he helped design a new type of lining for tropical jackets. Army men and civil engineers, as well as most colonial service officers, are among his chief customers. A few weeks ago, he equipped a score of security officers going to diamond mines in Sierra Leone.

The average customer spends between £80 and £110 on his kit, which includes one or two Palm Beach suits, bush clothes and equipment, the black cummerbund which is now the fashion in the tropics and a termite-proof trunk with thief-proof locks.

If he goes out for the first time, Knight advises him to insure his kit against loss, and to give his Palm Beach suit to his African boy to wash, rather than to a laundry, even if there is one at hand—"the boys are much better at it."

Finally, he hands over a list headed "Have

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

knows just the thing—a collapsible bath

you forgotten anything?" It covers items like spare lenses for spectacles, collar studs and laces, cigarettes and periodicals, and a hussif.

The firm acts as a clearing house for a man's last purchases, and parcels from all parts of Britain reach its warehouse to be crated by experts. Occasionally a man asks for a small personal service. One day recently, Knight collected a parcel of overdue laundry for a man sent to Fiji at short notice and dispatched it to him.

On the straight sale of their own stock goods or in commissions Baker's make a profit of ten per cent. Residents abroad often find it cheaper to cable "Banshee, London"—the firm's cable address—than buy some goods locally. A Kenya official who ordered two dozen Union Jacks for his Boy Scout troop wrote: "I can get these four shillings apiece cheaper from you than I can buy them here, in Nairobi."

Mail order business demands good organization. Every day between two hundred and three hundred letters pile up on Knight's desk. Last year, the firm's stamp collecting managing director, seventy-four year old Hugh Vidal, gathered stamps from 143 countries.

Knight once sent an exact copy of a seven-year-old dress suit within four days of receiving the order. A customer in a small oasis in the Sahara who cabled him frantically for a case of stage make-up later wrote: "The make-up arrived two hours before the dress rehearsal. *Macbeth* was a success."

The best mail order customers are housewives in the tropics who order sheets and blankets, stoves and furniture, curtains and cosmetics. Knight often chooses a dress for a woman, thousands of miles away, from her description of a magazine illustration. He says: "That is easy. We just go out and buy it and get a commission. But we have a lot of trouble with replacements."

IMPORTANT personages often give him a difficult time. Three years ago Knight refused to supply Haile Selassie's son, the Duke of Harar, with an exact copy of a blue Crown Derby tea service made for the Queen at the Coronation, and eventually persuaded the duke to accept a red one.

The Ethiopian prince has since become a good customer. His last order was for a camel-riding machine, a horse-riding machine and a bicycle-riding machine to install in his gymnasium. Knight studied the different motions of the animals at the London Zoo, got the machines made and dispatched them within three months.

Before India gained independence most maharajahs were good Baker's customers. One of them placed an order for three hundred Orpington hens for a poultry farm; after six months he changed over to cows and asked Hugh Vidal for twenty prize Jerseys. Vidal purchased them for several thousand pounds, and sent them to India by special freighter.

Two months later the maharajah travelled to London and reported: "Cows are sacred animals for us and my subjects complain that I treat mine badly. They are too thin." He was taken to see other Jerseys at a show to convince him that they all had thin, tapering backs.

One of the few things Knight failed to find was a second-hand guillotine ordered by a small Indian state. He went to Madame Tussaud's and read the manufacturer's name on the guillotine there. He traced it to a small French town only to find the firm had gone out of business long before. He tried other sources unavailingly. "Only India's independence saved me. The laws were changed and the guillotine was no longer required."

India was also responsible for one of the few bad debts Baker's ever incurred. Some years ago a maharajah asked Knight if his firm would print 2,500,000 rupees' worth of currency with his portrait on the bills. Knight agreed. The consignment of bills was being packed when the maharajah died and his son refused to pay for currency bearing his father's effigy. Says Knight: "We had to burn the lot. The plates alone cost us several hundred pounds."

A quiet-spoken man with a versatile nature, Knight, who is married to a doctor, has been with Baker's for thirty years. He has travelled widely, mostly in the Near East, and he knows the loneliness and hardship of life away from home. "We try not to write business letters to our clients. Instead, we write bright, chatty ones which go into their personal problems and needs."

One of his best customers is Haile Selassie, Ethiopia's emperor. He recently told Knight that he wanted to open a personal museum of small arms used in the last war. Could Knight get them?

Knight failed to get the arms privately. After long talks, the War Office agreed to supply thirty small arms, including light machine guns, pistols and a rocket-firing gun, from the Nottingham ordnance depot. Knight sent an assistant to collect them.

The man returned to King's Cross late at night and, knowing the office would be closed, deposited his load in the station's left luggage office. The curious attendant guessed the contents of the packages by their shape and called the police.

Says Knight: "At eleven p.m. the Clerkenwell police phoned me, saying: 'We've got a chap here who says he works for you. He looks more like an I.R.A. man to us, and he's got enough arms to shoot up a football crowd. There's some cock-and-bull story about an emperor. . .'."

Knight got into his car and drove into London to identify his assistant and get him out of trouble. "We made no extra charge to His Imperial Majesty." THE END

Baker's sell crockery and linen which they will ship to any destination abroad. And housewives can always obtain replacements by cabling "Banshee, London"

Tropical kit is the firm's speciality. But it will also supply latest Paris fashions

DEAD MAN'S FOLLY

by AGATHA CHRISTIE

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

Inspector Bland was sure that he knew who was the murderer. Poirot picked his own suspect with a pin

THE murder hunt contest at the garden fête at Nasse House, overlooking a Devon estuary, seemed an amusing idea—until Marlene Tucker, the young Girl Guide playing the part of the "body," was found strangled in the boathouse . . . and Hattie, the glamorous young Creole wife of Nasse's owner, Sir George Stubbs, disappeared.

Hercule Poirot was baffled. The girl's murder seemed motiveless. And what had happened to Lady Stubbs? Was there a link between her disappearance and the arrival at Nasse in his yacht of Etienne de Sousa, the West Indian cousin Hattie had not seen since childhood? Hattie had seemed to be afraid of de Sousa.

The girl's death and Lady Stubbs's disappearance were connected—Poirot was sure of that. But who was behind it all? Was it de Sousa? Was it Michael Weyman, the young architect staying at Nasse, who had seemed unusually interested in Hattie Stubbs? Was it Miss Brewis, Sir George's grimly efficient secretary? Amanda Brewis plainly hated Hattie. . . .

There seemed to be a host of other people who might be implicated. And always, in the background, there was the enigmatic figure of old Mrs. Folliat, whose family had once owned Nasse but who now lived at the Lodge. Mrs. Folliat, Poirot was convinced, knew much more about the affair than she pretended. . . .

Poirot didn't seem to be getting anywhere. He was much more puzzled than the police. They felt that the evidence pointed towards de Sousa.

PART FIVE

De Sousa Prepares To Leave

INSPECTOR BLAND sat in Helmmouth Police Station. Superintendent Baldwin, a large comfortable-looking man, sat on the other side of the table. Between the two men, on the table, was a black, sodden mass. Inspector Bland poked at it with a cautious forefinger.

"That's her hat all right," he said. "I'm sure of it, though I don't suppose I could swear to

it. She fancied that shape, it seems—so her maid told me. She'd got one or two of them. A pale pink and a sort of puce colour, too, but yesterday she was wearing the black one. And you fished it out of the river? That makes it look as though it's the way we think it is."

"No certainty yet," said Baldwin. "After all, anyone could throw a hat into the river."

"Yes," said Inspector Bland, "they could throw it in from the boathouse, or they could throw it in off a yacht."

"The yacht's sewed up all right," said Baldwin. "If she's there, alive or dead, she's still there."

"De Sousa hasn't been ashore today?"

"Not so far. He's on board. He's been sitting out in a deck chair smoking a cigar."

Inspector Bland glanced at the clock. "Almost time to go aboard," he said.

"Think you'll find her?" asked Baldwin.

"I wouldn't bank on it," said Bland. "I've got the feeling, you know, that he's a clever devil." He was lost in thought for a moment, poking again at the hat. Then he said: "What about the body—if there was a body? Any ideas about that?"

"Yes," said Baldwin, "I talked to Otterweight this morning. Ex-coastguard man. I always consult him about tides and currents.

"About the time the lady went into the Helm, if she did go into the Helm, the tide was just on the ebb. There is a full moon now and it would be flowing swiftly. Reckon she'd be carried out to sea and the current would take her towards the Cornish coast. There's no certainty where the body would fetch up or if it would fetch up at all. One or two drownings we've had here, we've never recovered the body. On the other hand, it might fetch up any day."

"If it doesn't, it's going to be difficult," said Bland.

"You're certain in your own mind that she did go into the river?"

"I don't see what else it can be," said Inspector Bland sombrely. "We've checked up, you know, on the buses and the trains. This place

The girl was screaming as a man playfully tried to push her overboard. Bland watched them from the steamer; no one else noticed

Merrall puffed at his pipe. "You think there *is* a body, don't you, Bland?"

is a cul-de-sac. She was wearing conspicuous clothes and she didn't take any others with her, so I should say she never left Nasse. Either her body's in the sea or else it's hidden somewhere on the property.

"What I want now," he went on heavily, "is *motive*. And the body of course," he added, as an afterthought. "Can't get anywhere until I find the body."

"What about the other girl—Marlene Tucker?"

"She saw it—or she saw something. We'll get at the facts in the end, but it won't be easy."

Baldwin in his turn looked up at the clock. "Time to go," he said.

The two police officers were received on board the yacht Espérance with all de Sousa's charming courtesy. He offered them drinks, which they refused, and went on to express a kindly interest in their activities.

The superintendent took up the running and expressed very delicately the object of their visit.

"You would like to search the Espérance?" De Sousa did not seem annoyed. Instead he seemed rather amused. "But why? You think I conceal the murderer, or do you think perhaps that I am the murderer myself?"

"It's necessary, Mr. de Sousa, as I'm sure you'll understand. A search warrant——"

De Sousa raised his hands. "But I am anxious to co-operate—eager! Let this be all among friends. You are welcome to search where you will in my boat."

The search was duly undertaken. It was a thorough one. In the end, striving to conceal their chagrin, the two police officers took leave of Mr. de Sousa.

"You have found nothing? How disappointing. But I told you that was so. You will perhaps have some refreshment now. No?"

He accompanied them to where their boat lay alongside. "And for myself?" he asked, "I am free to depart? You understand it becomes a little boring here. The weather is good. I should like very much to proceed to Plymouth."

"If you would be kind enough, sir, to remain here for the inquest—that is tomorrow—in case the coroner should wish to ask you anything.

"After that, sir," said Superintendent Baldwin, his face wooden, "you are of course at liberty to proceed where you will. . . ."

The inquest was almost painfully devoid of interest. Apart from the medical evidence and evidence of identity, there was little to feed the curiosity of the spectators. An adjournment was asked for and granted. The whole proceedings had been purely formal.

What followed the inquest, however, was not quite so formal. Inspector Bland spent the afternoon taking a trip in that well-known pleasure steamer, the Devon Belle. Leaving Brixwell at about three o'clock, it rounded the headland, proceeded around the coast, entered the mouth of the Helm and went up the river. There were about 230 people on board besides Inspector Bland. He sat on the starboard side of the boat, scanning the wooded shore.

They came round a bend in the river and Inspector Bland looked surreptitiously at his watch. It was just quarter-past four. They were coming now close beside the Nasse boathouse. It nestled remote in its trees with its little balcony and its small quay below. There was no sign apparent that there was anyone inside the boathouse, though as a matter of fact, to Inspector Bland's certain knowledge, there *was* someone inside. P.C. Hoskins, in accordance with orders, was on duty there.

Not far from the boathouse steps was a small launch. In the launch were a man and girl in holiday kit. They were indulging in what seemed like some rather rough horseplay. The girl was screaming, the man was playfully pretending he was going to duck her overboard.

At that same moment a stentorian voice spoke through a megaphone. "Ladies and gentlemen," it boomed, "you are now approaching the famous village of Gitcham, where we shall remain for three-quarters of an hour and where you can have a crab or lobster tea, as well as Devonshire cream.

"On your right are the grounds of Nasse House. You will pass the house itself in two or three minutes, it is just visible through the trees. Originally the home of Sir Gervase Folliat, a contemporary of Sir Francis Drake who sailed with him in his voyage to the New World, it is now the property of Sir George Stubbs.

"On your left is the famous Gooseacre Rock. There, ladies and gentlemen, it was the habit to deposit scolding wives at low tide and to leave them there until the water came up to their necks."

Everybody on the Devon Belle stared with fascinated interest at the Gooseacre Rock. Jokes were made and there were many shrill giggles and guffaws.

While this was happening, the holidaymaker in the boat, with a final scuffle, did push his lady friend overboard. Leaning over, he held her in the water, laughing and saying: "No, I won't pull you out till you've promised to behave."

Nobody, however, observed this, with the exception of Inspector Bland. They had all been listening to the megaphone, staring for the first sight of Nasse House through the trees, and gazing with fascinated interest at the Gooseacre Rock.

The holidaymaker released the girl, she sank under water and a few moments later reappeared on the other side of the boat. She swam to it and got in, heaving herself over the side with practised skill. Policewoman Alice Jones was an accomplished swimmer.

Inspector Bland came ashore at Gitcham with the other 230 passengers and consumed a lobster tea with Devonshire cream and scones. He said to himself as he did so: "So it *could* be done, and no one would notice. . . ."

While Inspector Bland was doing his experiment on the Helm, Hercule Poirot was experimenting with a tent on the lawn at Nasse House.

It was in actual fact the same tent where Madame Zuleika had told fortunes. When the rest of the marquees and stands had been dismantled, Poirot had asked for this to remain behind.

He went into it now, closed the flaps and went to the back of it. Deftly he unlaced the flaps there, slipped out, relaced them, and plunged into the hedge of rhododendron that immediately backed the tent. Slipping between a couple of bushes, he soon reached a small rustic arbour. It was a kind of summerhouse with a closed door. Poirot opened the door and went inside.

It was very dim inside because very little light came in through the rhododendrons which had grown up round it. There were one or two broken hockey sticks, a good many earwigs and spiders, and a round, irregular mark in the

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The result of the American elections may depend on fifteen historic words. They have brought new hope to the Negroes—and made Southerners threaten "civil war"

Colour—key to The White House

by ARTHUR WEBB

WHEN a Negress was fined last December for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger in a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and the Negroes of the town thereupon boycotted the buses, the manager of the bus line, a Mr. Bagley, was faced with a tricky problem. His son was about to open a petrol station on the border of the Negro quarter of the town. Friends warned Bagley that, unless his son dropped this project, there would be trouble.

At the same time, of course, the whole of the United States was faced with a tricky problem —or, rather, an aggravation of a problem that had been growing since, in 1954, the Supreme Court had ruled against segregation of Negro and white children in state-aided schools.

The solution to Mr. Bagley's problem proved simple. He got a friend to announce, at a Negro protest rally, that his son was opening the petrol filling station. The Negroes took it in good part, becoming the son's best customers and using his petrol station at which to fill the cars they brought in as alternative transport to his father's boycotted buses.

For the United States' problem there is no such convenient, even if muddled, solution.

The sudden revival of the colour problem flared into a controversy that split the nation, led to wild talk of another civil war, and may well be a deciding factor in this autumn's United States elections.

At the last census there were slightly more than 15 million Negroes in the United States. In a number of northern areas the Negroes now hold the voting balance of power between Democrats and Republicans. Already the question is being asked: "Can the Negro voter elect the President?"

In recent elections, about three-quarters of the Negro vote has been for the Democrats, to whom they were won over by Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s. Republicans estimate that a swing of ten per cent in that Negro vote would mean the election of a Republican Congress.

THE Negro leaders are, of course, well aware of this. The most militant of them are organized into the powerful National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (N.A.A.C.P.). At its forty-seventh annual convention in San Francisco in June, the leaders made it clear that they intended to exert this political advantage to force through the end of segregation in all the United States and compel the southern states to bow to the Supreme Court ruling.

All this sudden turmoil of colour started with only fifteen words in a judgment handed down by Chief Justice Warren on May 17, 1954: "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place."

For half a century it had been assumed that the Constitution compelled the states only to provide "equal" schooling facilities for Negro and white children, and did not compel them to open the same schools to all children regardless of colour. The judgment meant that they were now to go to the same schools.

It was soon followed by other rulings that Negroes could no longer be segregated in public transport vehicles, in parks and swimming-pools, in hotels, theatres, restaurants—rulings that, in fact, Negroes were no longer second-class citizens anywhere in the United States.

Actually the judgment did not change existing practices in thirty-one states, where the Negro population is comparatively small. But in some of the seventeen southern states the reaction

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Autherine Lucy, whose attempt to enter all-white Alabama University caused riots on the campus. Many people believe that a publicity-seeking group used her as a pawn

The Welcome Thief

by ***DUDLEY HOYS***

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

When Nance came into his life Chris felt strangely happy—and disturbed, too. What would folk say if he went with a gipsy . . . ?

"But when am I to see you again?" Chris asked. "Maybe in a day or two," she said

On that showery afternoon Chris Rennick took with him a vacuum flask and a slab of cake. It was scarcely worth while going back to Hollowground for tea. The tractor chugged along the road and turned down the rough lane to Thwaites, once a farmhouse and now only a ruin survived by its stone-built barn. He had already carted the circular saw here this morning and cut up some of the trees hauled from the spinney behind.

In five minutes he was sliding a trunk against the rasping teeth, the shrill buzz tearing apart the quietude. Across the breast of the fell above glided cloud shadows, so that the moving patches of light and shade seemed to set the great slopes rippling.

A sudden, short spatter of rain swept through the dale. He twisted a sack around his shoulders and went on with the job. It had been a wet week, but it would bring on the grass.

That reminded him. Down by the beck a stretch of the bank had been undermined by a couple of recent spates. His father had said: "Any wall gaps in Home Pasture?"

"Nay. Why?"

"If them bullocks got through to edge o' beck 'twould likely give way under weight of 'em. With water that high, they'd not have much chance o' scramblin' out."

Chris grimaced now at the thought. These last few days the beck had been a roaring mass of foam beating against the rocks. Nothing but a fish could have lived in it.

The brief shower gave place to an hour of warm sunshine. It was followed by another dark threat overhead and a swishing downpour that drove him to dump over the saw its home-made cover of half an old tyre and run inside the barn.

Diving through the near doorway, he nearly trod on three eggs nestling in a wisp of hay. He grinned at them, without surprise. The Hollowground hens seemed to favour this spot.

While he was squatting on a mound of hay and swallowing his tea, the sun came out once more, a bright yellow shaft striking through the doorway. The warmth of it and the washed silence were lulling. His head began to droop and his eyes were half-closed. What made them open abruptly was a slight rustling sound. He blinked them wide just in time to see a hand drawing back through the doorway with an egg in its fingers.

Before he could stir, the hand reappeared, swift, slim, sunburned. It closed on a second egg. His own strong hand shot out, grabbed the wrist, and gave a powerful jerk. There was a scared gasp, and a girl came sprawling forward and landed on her knees, almost across his lap.

He was startled, and embarrassed too. If it had been a man he would have known how to deal with the situation. As it was, he could only say awkwardly: "We don't care for thieves in these parts."

She had twisted to her feet, a girl of about eighteen in an old blouse and dark skirt. Her hair was a deep brown, thick and silky, and the skin of her oval face with its high cheekbones had a golden tint. Chris had not seen her gipsy kind since his early childhood.

The fright in her amber eyes was changing to a sort of challenging amusement. She stared at him, at his solemn expression, and said: "Well, what are you going to do?"

He hesitated, tried to remain severe. She laughed and said carelessly: "What's an egg?"

"Happen they're our property, not yours. 'Tis awful to catch a young girl stealing."

She laughed again. "How old are you—ninety? Put a wig on, and you'd be a judge."

He heard himself chuckle. "You'll have to pay for 'em. Present price is three-an'-six a dozen."

"Don't be so mean. Gipsies never pay for anything." She blew out her lips. "Phew! It gave me a shock when you grabbed my wrist. This place——"

"It used to be a separate farm. Now it's

"I'd tell you if I could—God knows I would!" Chris cried. He stared round at the circle of gipsy faces. So they didn't believe him!

part of ours, Hollowground." He found he was enjoying talking to her, and it puzzled him. "Where are you from?"

"We're down at Greenbrow for a bit."

"Oo, aye!"

The girl leaned against the barn wall. She said: "When you smile, you're nice."

Chris felt sheepish. "Ought to be ashamed o' yourself, pinching eggs."

"Ought I, granpa?"

It was no good. He had to laugh and forgive her. He said a trifle self-consciously: "I've never spoken to a gipsy before. Reckon I thought they'd be different, somehow."

For a moment her eyes had a strange wistfulness. "I know. You think we're dark and rough and foreign. Some of us are. But we're changing. I've been to school, a month here, a term there. My father owns land and cottages. Sometimes I——" She broke off and bit her lip, and then went on vehemently: "But I could never live in a town."

"Nor me neither. Mind you, farmin's hard work. But I wouldn't swap it for big pay an' short hours in a city."

She glanced out at the tall ridges softened by their spring greenery, the wet, shining crags, and the emerald of the dale itself speckled by the white foam of bird-cherry. She said: "It's glorious round here. I wish we could stay on. What's your name?"

"Chris. Chris Rennick."

"Mine's Nance. D'you like it?" And, while he wrestled with his Puritan nature she threw back her head with a teasing laugh. "You do. But you're afraid to say so."

He said gruffly: "I must get on with the sawin'." As an afterthought, and avoiding her eyes, he added: "You can have the eggs."

"D'you want tenpence-ha'penny for them?"

Something in her voice, a sort of caressing impertinence, made him grunt with laughter. He pretended to raise a threatening hand, and she darted away, paused to wave to him, and swung herself over a field-wall with supple lightness. . . .

The next morning, when Chris went along to the byre to milk, something was tied to the latch of the door. It was a basket woven of briars, their thorns removed, packed with soft young moss and primroses. On a slip of paper tucked into the moss were the pencilled words *For You*.

He stared at it with a curious, warm feeling. Nothing like this had ever happened to him before.

Two days later she appeared out of nowhere. He was in Tarn Ling, busy with the last-born lambs. Despite the sentinel dog, one anxious ewe kept thrusting herself forward to protect her child. He said: "Git oot!" and in the act of pushing the mother aside caught a glimpse of a familiar blouse over his shoulder.

"I'll hold her," said Nance, and her slim, shapely arms coiled around the ewe's neck. "Don't worry, you woolly old fusser. He's not going to hurt your lamb."

Surprisingly, the ewe remained quiet. He said admiringly: "Anybody 'ud think you were a farmer's daughter."

"D'you wish I was?"

Unthinkingly, he answered: "Aye, that I do."

All the sparkle seemed to leave her, and she became so silent that he said: "What's the matter?"

She stood there with her eyes towards the fells, but he had the impression that she was seeing nothing. There was a hint of the downcast about about her. In his ignorance he said: "Aren't you feeling well?"

The mood vanished in the instant. She said: "I'd love to put a bomb under you, Chris. You're so solemn and stupid and sweet. Here!"

She caught him by the shoulders and swung him into a protesting, capering dance, while the half-alarmed sheep sheered off, whickering, and the hiss and gurgle of the river accompanied their dancing.

Laughing and panting, he was allowed to stop at last. "Nance, you're a fair capper, actin' like this in the middle o' the mornin'."

Her answer was mysterious, and failed to make sense. "I had to," she said. "I felt so miserable. . . ."

Within a week he saw her twice more.

The second time, on a Thursday evening, their meeting was deliberate. They walked by the frothing beck in the last hour of daylight, the surrounding fells clean and sharp against the waning sky. Bluebells were a haze in the flanking spinneys, and dotted among scree and boulder the blanched blossom of thorn trees was a white miracle.

Presently she said: "Be honest, Chris. You like me a lot, but not enough. Isn't that it?"

He groped for the right words, and failed to find them. She put them in his mouth. "I'm a gipsy; I'm different.

He tried to deny it, caught the pleading in her eyes, and nodded unhappily.

"Are you scared of me?" she asked.

He grinned uneasily. "Scared of a little slip like you!"

For a minute or two she was in a bantering mood. "It 'ud take a gallon of petrol to set you on fire," she teased. "I'm the opposite. P'raps that's why I want you."

Chris said stiffly: "'Tis difficult to talk about these things."

"Difficult for you. I'll tell you what you're thinking. I look like a gipsy. If I had your dale accent, and wore a Sunday frock to go out with you, and my hair tucked under a hat, you'd feel at home. Wouldn't you?"

He gulped. "Nance——"

"I know. I can read your mind." Her smile was fleeting, almost contemptuous. "I've never had a frock like that in my life. My mother wouldn't have let me. She died last year. I've never had my hair done any other way than it is now, the same as all our womenfolk. Would you dare to take me to a dance as I am?"

Colour flooded up the sides of his neck. Her voice went on in gentle mockery. "What would the dalesfolk say? 'Yon Chris Rennick's gey daft to pick oop wi' the likes o' her.'"

He laid a pleading hand on her arm, but she drew away. "I'm not blaming you," she said. "We're all in ruts, me as much as you."

She sat down on a boulder, her head turned from him, and he stood there dumbly, aching to draw her to him and held back by the truth of what she had been saying.

When she went on there was a catch in her breathing: "For once, I wish I'd been born a dales girl. Leave me here, Chris."

"But——"

"Please! Go away." Both tears and determination were in her voice.

He said soberly: "All right. But when am I to see you again?"

"I don't know. In a day or two, maybe."

He walked off in bewildered distress. In his twenty-three solid, placid years he had never dreamed he could get into such a muddle with himself.

He was still turning the problem over and over when he went to bed, and it stayed with him at his work the next day. He was glad that in the evening he had to attend the meeting of the young farmers' club down the dale. A crack with the other chaps would help to take him out of himself.

He left the meeting at ten and started to cycle back through the moonlight. Opposite the narrow lane leading to Greenbrow Wood figures loomed up out of the shadow of the walls. They were all around him—eight or nine gipsies. Their hair looked very black in that silvery light.

He said sturdily: "Here, what's your game? Git oot o' the way!"

One of them pointed along the lane. "Her father wants you. Down there."

Staring around at their inscrutable faces, Chris summed up his chance of breaking through the ring, and knew there was none. The only thing to do was to humour them. He said: "Aye, I'll come," and began to wheel his bike, hemmed in by his escort.

Farther on the stone walls reflected the flickering of a wood fire and the aromatic reek of the smoke tingled in his nostrils. Four caravans were parked there, whippets tied to their wheels. Several women sat near the fire, their bony cheeks stressed by the light of it.

From behind them stepped a man about fifty. He, too, had high cheekbones and eyes that glinted out of a mask-like face.

The man said: "Where's Nance?"

Chris said in quick alarm: "Nay, what's happened? I know nowt."

"Where's Nance?"

"I tell you I don't know," Chris repeated anxiously.

"Where's Nance?"

"Haven't I told you I don't know?" he almost shouted. "What's happened to her? Where's she gone? Since when——?"

"You should know. She met you last night. She never came back."

"But——" He looked around at the circle of watching faces, and back at the middle-aged man. "I've not seen her since then. Sitting on a rock by the beck, she was. Why haven't you done summat about it? She might have met with an accident."

The man said in that quiet, unemotional tone: "Nance is my daughter. She doesn't have accidents. What have you done with her?"

"Done? Don't talk so feckless! I'm just as worried about it as you are. We'll have to make a search. Come on!" Chris swung around, to face four gipsies barring the way. They were as impassive as the very crags on the fells. He wondered, if he flung himself at them, whether knives would flash.

Nance's father was speaking. "You're the one to know. You were with her."

"You're daft! As if I'd have harmed a hair of her head!"

"You were with her."

Chris said through his teeth: "I swear I've not seen her since last night, sitting on yon boulder."

That thin mouth squeezed at one corner. "Fifty years ago our folk would have made you talk. Now we have to be more careful. Something could happen at your farm."

Chris stared at him. "What d'you mean?" he said. "Look here, I'm gey fond o' Nance, but if you start talkin' like that, the police——"

A man among the circle laughed softly. Nance's father said: "We take care not to trouble the police. They take care not to trouble us. Where's Nance?"

Chris drew a long, shaky breath. "I'd tell you if I could, God knows I would!"

With a sudden, decided movement Nance's father turned to two of the other men. "Get down to the policeman in the village and tell him," he said. Then he looked at Chris with dark, incalculable eyes: "You can go."

The escort stood aside. Chris said without hostility: "You couldn't be more worried than me. Nay! I'm off to start searchin'."

He jumped on the bike, pedalled fast down the lane, and swung left up the dale road.

Drawing level with the Home Pasture, he heard the wild bellowing of bullocks. He could see clearly across the moonlit field. A gap in the far wall had been torn down. Only three bullocks were visible. The other five must be on the crumbling river bank.

He leaped from the bike and tore across the field. The wild bellowing had a note of panic.

Through the wall gap he scrambled. Then, for a brief second, the scene on the river bank brought him to a dumbfounded halt. Four bullocks were close to the edge, bawling lustily. A fifth had broken through the undercut bank. It was struggling in three feet of swirling water, vainly trying to drag itself clear. And towards mid-stream, balanced on a rock jutting above the surface, stood Nance, swishing a branch at the bullock's withers and trying to goad it to safety.

Chris leaned forward and grabbed its horns. Nance lashed the branch across the animal's rump. The sting of it and Chris's muscular heaving at its head took sudden effect. With a lurch the bullock lunged clear over the broken bank.

Between Nance and the bank were two projecting rocks. The way she leaped from one to the other brought his heart to his mouth. He caught her hands, held her safe. "Nance!" he exclaimed. "What's it all mean? Where have you been?"

She nodded towards the pass at the head of the dale. "I walked over last night. I took the train to Manchester. I came back this evening."

He said: "But why did you go?"

"For these. It was my own money. I spent every penny."

For the first time he noticed how she was dressed. Instead of the old blouse and skirt, she was wearing a light costume, splashed with water and streaked with mud that must have come from slipping over on the river bank. Her thin, new stockings were streaming. Her hair had been trimmed and waved, but hanks of it drooped limp and sodden against her cheek.

She said: "I did look so smart. I felt sure you'd——" She glanced down at her bedraggled self, and her mouth began to tremble.

Chris's voice held awe. "So 'twas for me? An' this, too." He stared at the mud and water on her, and across at the bullocks.

"'Tisn't the clothes that matter," he said slowly. And he took her in his arms.

THE END

GENIUS—I

Genius only means an infinite capacity for taking pains.

Jane Ellice Hopkins

"GEORGE! QUICK-THE TIDE'S COMING IN!"

"DON'T HURRY ME, - I'M FINISHING MY MURRAYMINT!"

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Borneo people

Continued from page 13

and some of our chieftain hosts were regaled. As dusk fell preparations were made for dancing.

Two or three Iban warriors opened the programme with solo jigs. Then we were privileged to witness an event rare in these days—the initiation dance which used to be performed when a newly captured head was brought to a long-house.

The Ibans once collected heads with as much zeal as acquisitive people in some countries collect furniture, pictures, porcelain and other *objets d'art*, though perhaps with a less discriminating eye for period pieces.

It is said that in some groups the taking of a head was regarded by the women as an essential test of masculine virtue, and that no maiden would accept the advances of a youth who had not so proved himself.

At midnight the show ended. Many in the audience yawned, stretched their limbs, and rose to disperse. Silently they walked across the lawn, like shadows of human beings in a dim, unreal, dissolving world.

I said good night to Koh and his daughters, and descended the path to the river to board our boat. The air was warm and humid. To cool myself before sleep, I stripped and plunged into the Rejang. I did not venture far nor stay long submerged in the cold, refreshing water, lest a crocodile should be swimming nearby, hunting for its supper. . . .

The total population of Sarawak is less than 600,000. It includes Malays who are exclusively Moslems, Chinese who are predominantly Buddhists, Europeans who are usually Christians, Indians who are generally Hindus, and Melanaus who are an impartial mixture of pagans, Christians and Mohammedans.

Pagan tribes—the Ibans, Punans, Penans, Kayans, Kenyahs, Muruts and so on—account for rather more than half the population. Of these, the Ibans are the most dynamic, and since they are more numerous than any other community, with the possible exception of the Chinese, their qualities will probably make them, as they become educated, the pre-eminent people in the country.

UNTIL recent times, they were perhaps the wickedest head-hunters in the world. Nevertheless, I always felt safe with them. At Simanggang, they even gave me a bodyguard.

One bachelor had been selected from each long-house for miles around, so that every native village in the district should be represented. The fourteen youths had been picked for their good looks, and they knew it.

They were dressed to kill, in both senses of the term. Indeed, they were over-dressed. On their heads were silver crowns surmounted by tall black and white hornbills' feathers. Iban males do not cut their hair, and the long, jet-black locks of these splendid bucks fell in loose, thick tresses far down their backs. From their pierced ear-lobes dangled heavy brass ear-rings, round their necks were silver chains, across their chests stretched tinselled sashes, and their arms bore many bracelets of beaten silver.

Some warriors wore silver belts supporting short skirts so thickly encrusted with Chinese dollars that they seemed solid metal kilts. Below their knees were red and black garters, strung with small tinkling bells. Not content with all these sartorial falderals, most of them sported in addition wrought-silver anklets above bare feet. The men wore at their waists head-hunters' swords, weapons with richly carved staghorn hilts tufted with locks of the hair of slain enemies.

John Barcroft, the Resident at Simanggang, greeted me, and when we turned to stroll to the Residency, the Ibans collected in formation round me. Their bodies glistened like burnished metal and their ear-rings and necklaces, sashes and kilts, bracelets and anklets glittered in the sunlight. Her Majesty the Queen driving to Parliament is not more regally conducted.

For two days I was almost perpetually busy, for I inspected the government offices, a hospital, two or three schools, the bazaar, the prison and various other institutions, as well as attending numerous functions. Wherever I went, the Ibans felt it their duty to accompany me.

The Ibans rather look down on the peace-loving Land Dyaks, whom years ago they forced to retreat to the hills.

One of my early expeditions to Land Dyak villages was on Senggi Mountain, about forty miles from Kuching. Datu Bandar, the senior Malay chief in Sarawak, accompanied me. A man in his early forties, he was a prudent leader in the public affairs of the colony and a cheerful friend.

Senggi's summit rises to nearly two thousand feet above sea level, and its Dyak residents have built their huts at about 1,700 feet. There, seven hamlets cluster together in a group reached by a precipitous, rocky path twisting among jungle trees.

We were greeted by the chief and the most bizarre collection of tribesmen. Their brown faces betrayed great shyness, many looking at the ground instead of into our eyes as we greeted them; yet they grinned with pleasure and their voices were glad. They wore an extraordinary variety of clothes. An assortment of inappropriate Western garments had recently arrived for them from America, provided by the United Nations. One old man stood sweltering in a thick fur coat, while another wore upon his savage head a lady's cocktail-party hat of chic New York design.

The orang kaya conducted us to his house. It was a building of bamboo and attap raised a few feet above the ground on wooden stilts—a very short long-house with only four apartments accommodating as many families. Most of the villagers had built their own one-room huts.

The neighbouring kampongs were grouped close together, connected by well-worn paths meandering through the undergrowth. The buildings looked wild, rising here and there among the lanky forest trees, their floors made of split bamboo and their walls and roofs constructed of layers of attap which made them look like haystacks.

Some were erected on such steep slopes that although the inner end of the house stood on piles jutting only two or three feet from the ground, the outer end was skied thirty or forty feet in the air and supported on tall stilts like high scaffolding. They seemed flimsy, yet were strong enough to survive the fearful storms which sometimes lashed the mountain. The Dyaks have an uncanny genius for crazy building.

After touring the villages I returned to the orang kaya's kampong for a bath. A tub was placed for me in a small round house which is the nearest thing in a Land Dyak village to a temple. One such building stands in each community, a sacred place constructed to lodge heads taken in battle.

Unlike the other pagan tribes of Borneo, Land Dyaks may not keep these honourable trophies in their homes; so in the centre of every village is this circular building, raised on piles and made of attap with a steep, cone-shaped roof crowned by a carved finial. It looks like a fancy hayrick propped on stilts, and is so holy that no human being may stay or sleep in it.

The local authorities did me the singular honour of letting me have a wash in it—as if the Archbishop had given me permission to take a bath in Canterbury Cathedral.

With soap, towel and dry clothes I climbed a tree-trunk staircase to its door and entered. As I poured cansfuls of refreshing water over myself, however, I felt that I was not alone. I sensed that strange eyes were watching me. This seemed odd, for the place was empty.

Then, looking up at the rafters, I saw that I was indeed being observed. On a pole hung a couple of aged, fleshless skulls, inclining their bone faces towards me with grinning teeth and round, vacant eye-holes, scrutinizing my every splash. I realized that they disapproved of my sacrilegious conduct. I finished my bath, dressed, waved goodbye to the heads and left. . . .

More than three years passed before I could sail up the Rejang again and renew my friendship with Koh and his family. He had planned for the occasion a ceremony of extraordinary pagan significance and solemnity.

A small party of official notables accompanied me to witness the event, among them Christopher Dawson, Acting Governor of Sarawak, and John Barcroft.

It was April. In the Iban country we saw that the paddy was ripe, and rice harvesting was in full swing.

Native economy in Sarawak is a simple affair. Besides growing rice, every village breeds pigs and keeps hens. Some villages own goats as well, while the Kelabits on their distant plateau tend herds of cattle. Variety is added to the natives' diet by wild pigs, deer, monkeys and other woodland creatures, as well as by fish from the rivers and fruit from the jungle.

From the forest also the men gather various kinds of produce with commercial value in the outer world—gutta-percha, camphor, rattans, beeswax, honey, vegetable tallow, damar, wild rubber, sago, illipi nuts and edible birds' nests. These goods are loaded in the community's boats and taken to the nearest trading centre.

Many such centres—like Kapit—exist along the Sarawak rivers.

A Methodist mission school which flourished before the war but had suffered the indignity of bombing during the Japanese occupation had been reopened. We visited it. Its master was the Reverend Burr H. Baughman, an austere but friendly American with a gentle Chinese wife whom he had married during an earlier period of schoolmastering in Penang.

This zealous couple conducted us through their establishment, introducing us to their staff and pupils. The buildings were simple, clean and prim. The students, almost a score of Iban boys and girls of various ages from eight to eighteen, came from long-houses up the Rejang and the Balleh.

I personally was sorry, though not surprised, to find that the missionaries discouraged the children from wearing native dress. Indeed, a foreign style of costume seemed compulsory. The boys' long hair had been shorn completely. Their loin-cloths were discarded, and the young Ibans strolled around with their hands thrust into the pockets of short trousers, like small English or American schoolboys. Some of them were so modern as to wear shirts. The girls likewise were not immediately recognizable as Ibans.

A FEW miles above Kapit we turned from the broad highway of the Rejang into the narrower byway of its tributary, the Balleh, on which Koh's long-house was situated.

Koh was waiting to greet us. With him were his two elder daughters, Iba and Mindun, clad in habitual finery.

Koh laughed joyously and clasped my outstretched hand in both of his as I stepped ashore. Tedong, a local chief, muttered words of blessing while he waved a protesting cockerel over my head. Mindun held out to me a glass of tuak, repeating insistently as she did so the word "*Buai*."

I threw the wine into the water to appease the spirits, and Iba handed me another glassful. I quaffed it without drawing breath, then held the empty tumbler upside-down to show that not a drop of the repulsive liquid had been wasted.

An Iban home looks like an enormously elongated barn on stilts. In the bad old days prudent men built their homes at a height which made it impossible for foes to jab spears through the floor.

A long-house, which can be up to a quarter of a mile long, is not so much a house in our meaning as a village. Koh's was the home of thirty-eight families, and work was in hand to add rooms for another ten.

The interior, like the interiors of other Iban long-houses, was divided into almost equal halves by a main wall which ran down the centre. On one side were rooms, one for each family; on the other side was a long, open gallery used by everybody.

It was the club where the local lads and worthies gathered to exchange news, tell stories, talk scandal and imbibe drink. It was the hall where concerts and dances were held, and public meetings took place. It was, in fact, the hub of social life. At

Spot the Lawbreaker

Somewhere in this scene the law is being broken. Can you see where? A barrister gives the answer on page 34.

DRAWN BY RONALD LAMPITT

GENIUS—2

Genius is the talent of a man who is dead.

E. & J. de Goncourt

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nights, it also became a dormitory. While parents, grandparents, newlyweds and children slept in their private apartments, the young bachelors were relegated to the gallery. Unmarried girls occupied a loft above.

Gradually a great assembly of Iban chiefs, European officials, long-house bucks, pagan priestesses, pantun chanters, warriors, housewives, husky children and tiny infants settled in a deep semi-circle round Koh and me as we sat in the long-room.

After I had performed the inevitable bedara, four girls who were to sing pantuns for me moved forward to the attack. They knelt in a row, a quartet especially selected for their feminine attraction. Mindun was their leader. Her three companions were younger maidens, with fresh, delicious, beguiling prettiness. One girl I recognized as Siah, and another as her sister Sani. The third was the loveliest of them all.

Instinctively I knew that she was Segura, Koh's youngest daughter, the delightful child whom I had met in Kapit three years earlier. Now, at sixteen, the bud had burst into flower. She sat before me transformed, in all the glory of young womanhood.

In her long black hair were set exquisite posies of tropical flowers. Her slanting, almond-shaped eyes had dark lustre; her flawless skin was golden brown. Her father doted on her, and she was doubtless accustomed now to the admiration of other men.

After the preliminary bout of carolling and carousing ended the afternoon was well advanced. We decided to permit ourselves an hour or two of relaxation.

I descended to the river for a swim. As I dressed afterwards a messenger came to bid me to a cocktail party—of all extraordinary phenomena in the jungle—in Koh's room.

I entered the chief's private apartment and found it a hive of activity. Food was cooking on a crackling fire. Women stooped over pots preparing our dinner, girls arranged scores of saucers for bedaras yet to be performed, men squatted in a circle on the floor eating supper from bowls of rice, and children scampered everywhere.

Around a table sat a jovial group of friends: Jugah, Grinang, Tedong—Jugah's younger brother—and my half-dozen travelling companions.

Mindun walked into the room. Grinang, self-appointed court jester, called to her to join us, so that we might have songs to accompany our wine. Ever ready to oblige, she came to the table Then Grinang resorted to his smattering of English.

"Keess!" he cried, making the smacking sound of kissing.

Mindun grinned and did not hesitate. She seized Barcroft's head between her hands and pressed her mouth to his.

Smiles round the table became more

Spot the Lawbreaker

See page 32

THE pet shop owner is breaking the law by keeping birds in cages too small for them. A barrister-at-law says that, under the Protection of Birds Act, 1954, cages must be of sufficient "height, length and breadth to permit the bird to stretch its wings freely." A first offender is liable to a £25 fine or one month's imprisonment or both. The law is not applicable to poultry, or to competitions.

beaming, chatter more brisk and friendship more cordial.

Koh was anxious that his hospitality should be abundant. He sent for Segura to help to entertain us.

The young girl came into the room quietly, unobtrusively, as if she hoped that her arrival would be unnoticed. Koh asked her to pour me a drink, and she did so dutifully. But everyone awaited the pantun, and she had no choice but to sing. After a few moments she began in a small, sweet voice to recount what she had heard others speak of my virtues. Her eyes never shifted their gaze from the floor.

The company murmured encouragingly when she ceased singing and handed me the wine. I drank half of it, and returned the rest to her.

"Keess!" called Grinang with a joyous cackle.

"Keess!" cried Tedong and Jugah.

"Keess!" said Mindun.

Segura gave a half-hearted laugh, and looked around as if to see where she could escape.

"Keess! Keess! Keess!" repeated the Don Juans in chorus. Others took up the refrain.

Segura still hesitated, a polite but uneasy smile upon her lips. To end her embarrassment I gave her a light, paternal salutation on one cheek.

The company clapped and laughed. Conversation started again. In the middle of the talk, Segura brought a chair and sat beside me. Without saying a word she slipped her hand into mine and held it fast. . . .

BARCROFT and I pitched our camp-beds in a temporary hut. I was awakened next morning by the squealing of a pig. It was a sacrificial beast, to be killed during the day's rites. As I shaved near the door the pig eyed me in dumb appeal, and I felt guilty, for I knew that I myself would be its executioner.

At last everything was ready for the special ceremony called Gawai Nanga Rumah, which is performed when the gods are believed to visit a house.

The Ibans dressed in their best attire. I, too, was to appear in wild garb. Round my waist Tedong buckled a leather belt and sheathed sword; over my shoulders he hung a cloak of goat's hair, and on my head he set a beaded war-cap crowned with Argus pheasant plumes. Then Koh garlanded me with a large, rough copper-wire collar, the emblem of office of a dignitary about to conduct hallowed pagan rites.

At an agreed signal I descended the main staircase to the river bank, followed by Koh and Grinang. There Mindun handed me a bumper of tuak which I flung into the Balleh as a preliminary gesture of goodwill to the spirits. At that, a salute of nineteen guns began to roar from cannon on the platform above, and I and my faithful chieftains started with sedate steps to ascend again to the house.

On the topmost step Segura gave me a second goblet of wine, which followed the way of the first. On the veranda lay the little pig, tied and surprisingly quiet. Jugah stood beside it holding a spear. He handed me the weapon. Placing its tip above the animal's throat, I swiftly drove it down through the jugular vein. The beast died and a deep sigh of gratification escaped the crowd.

I turned my face from the slaughter and saw Segura smiling kindly at me. She held out to me another glass of wine, which I swallowed at one gulp. Then Koh led us into the house, where food for a bedara was spread in the centre of the gallery.

I was permitted to take off my head-hunting warrior's garb, for furs and feathers were hot under the equatorial sun. Dawson, however, had to don the full regalia of fancy dress, for he was to perform one of the most remarkable parts of the Gawai. He was actually to wait upon the gods, to hand them the food which I had prepared for them.

On the roof-top of the long-house, over the centre of the building, the Ibans had constructed a small, one-roomed hut, looking rather like a mountaineer's shelter skied in solitude

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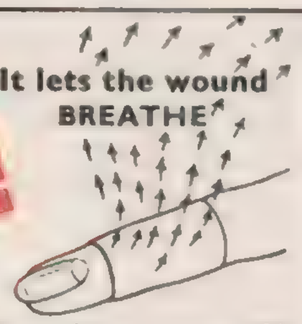

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on an Alpine ridge. A bamboo stairway led steeply from the veranda to the eaves of the dwelling and thence up the roof to this refuge. Both the stairway and the hut were fancifully decorated with foliage and flowers.

The pagans assert that on the occasion of a Gawai the gods visit this roof dwelling. It would be their lodging during the festival. Expediency, as well as reverence, demanded that they should be plentifully provided with meat and drink.

Dawson was to perform this service. Accoutred in pagan uniform, he scaled the improvised ladder to the holy of holies. Segura, Siah and Sani helped him in his religious duties. Up the staircase with them went enough food and drink to nourish an army of gods through a protracted siege.

Dawson and his elect company tarried aloft for half an hour, while we engaged in a complex operation intended to assist the work. A stout pole rose from the floor to the ceiling; it disappeared through the rafters, penetrated the shingles and entered the house of the gods itself. A long piece of cloth hung from it. When Dawson and his attendants were established upstairs, Koh and Jugah built a rattan fence round the pole and covered it with Iban blankets and branches. Inside the fence they placed a plate of food.

Koh summoned my aid. I dressed once more in the garb of a barbarian chieftain and held a naked parang in one hand. Into the other hand Jugah thrust a light wooden object shaped like a tambourine, with innumerable long, thin strips of dry banana leaf like strings on a huge mop. They fluttered and rustled when I shook them. Koh was attired in full war garb, and he, too, held a sword in one hand and a tambourine mop in the other.

Assuming a stance facing the artificial fence, he invited me to join him there, and asked me to follow him in everything. I promised obedience.

Koh then opened his mouth, hollered aloud in such a frightening way that my blood ran cold, and at the same time slashed the air with his sword and violently shook his mop. I imitated his sounds and gestures as exactly as I could. Then he started to march with lolloping, prancing steps round the fence, periodically beating the atmosphere with his sword, rustling his mop and giving horrid shrieks to drive unseen creatures away.

I followed suit, gambolling on my feet, gesticulating with my arms and sounding off with my mouth like a mad mullah. A crowd of natives watched every movement.

The episodes of the Gawai then became as difficult to follow as the simultaneous items in a three-ringed circus. Many different events occurred at the same time. Dawson was still playing host to the gods upstairs, Jugah and Barcroft were engaged in their solemn tomfoolery in the gallery, I was back where I started conducting a bedara on the floor, and Koh was now mustering some fantastically costumed youths and girls for a procession.

Now it was noon. Nearly five hours had passed since the ceremonies began. Rites and revels would continue into the morrow. But we could not wait. We had to return down-river.

Wine was offered to us, and Mindun and Segura sang. Then we visitors decided that it was our turn to contribute a song as a grand conclusion to this memorable meeting. We proposed that the whole company should link arms and sing "Auld Lang Syne."

Koh and his chiefs and people were mystified by this suggestion, but entered into it with the zest of children learning a new game. Before long a huge chain of hand-clasps joined everyone round the gallery.

As we quickened the pace and began the faster handshakes which introduce its climax, their chanting gained in volume and gusto, until the house trembled. Never in Scotland's hills and glens did the old lament receive a more vigorous rendering.

At last the moment for departure came. We emerged from the gallery on to the veranda and found the penghulus and principal women drawn up in two formal rows to take leave of us. Moving along the row of women, I shook hands and said "Tabeh" to each in turn. When I came to Siah, Sani and Mindun I kissed them gently.

I did the same to Segura. At that a sorrowful little cry broke from her. Suddenly she flung her arms round my neck and kissed me many times.

Afterwards I walked along the line of penghulus, taking leave of each of them. Last of all I came to Koh, standing at the head of the high stairway sloping steeply from the platform to the river. The Grand Old Gentleman of Borneo looked tired, but that did not affect this imperturbable dignity. In one hand he held a small basket made of fresh banana leaf, containing a boiled egg, some rice and other trifling viands. He gave it to me and begged that I would keep it wherever I travelled for the next three days, as a ticket of safe conduct through the world of ill-disposed spirits.

Then he turned and led the way down the tree-trunk stairway. Our party followed, and behind us descended Mindun and Segura and all the chiefs.

As we embarked in our long-boats, the group of Ibans stayed at the water's edge. Our oarsmen dipped their paddles and took a few strokes. The craft began to move towards midstream. Then the penghulus on the bank started a long, haunting farewell wail.

MY next chance to visit Sarawak came when I had to discuss some government reforms with Temonggong Koh and his fellow-chiefs. John Barcroft went with me.

We spent a night at Kapit—where Ian Urquhart, the district officer, joined us—and I decided to revisit the local Methodist mission school. Since my last visit, it had received some new pupils. One of them was a notable and surprising recruit—Koh's daughter Segura.

News had reached me in Singapore a few weeks earlier that she had left her paternal long-house and gone to boarding school. I received the tidings with mixed feelings. The impulse to give Segura a modern education was worthy; yet was it sensible? Koh's daughter was no longer a child who could patiently acquire a rudimentary knowledge of such things as reading, writing and arithmetic. She was already sixteen years old, and so had reached a period when her thoughts would be turning from classroom studies to more adult interests. Was she not too grown up and too independent to submit to school discipline?

I felt apprehensive, too, on another score. Segura had matured in the traditions and ways of a long-house. It might have been more prudent to have started her schooling at an earlier age. The transition from a "primitive" long-house child into a "civilized" modern maiden would then have been more gradual and tactful. Had, in fact, the change been too sudden, too disturbing, too revolutionary?

That day at Kapit I gained no clear impression of the answers to my questions, for Segura was away from the school. On hearing that I was on my way up-river, she had left two days earlier to rejoin her family and welcome me. I gathered, however, from her master's cool responses to my inquiries, that she was not one of his aptest and favourite pupils. With a wry smile he remarked that her chief interest seemed to be men.

I looked forward with keen sympathy and a touch of apprehension to meeting Segura again.

NEXT WEEK: Segura's strange love match angers her father

GENIUS—3

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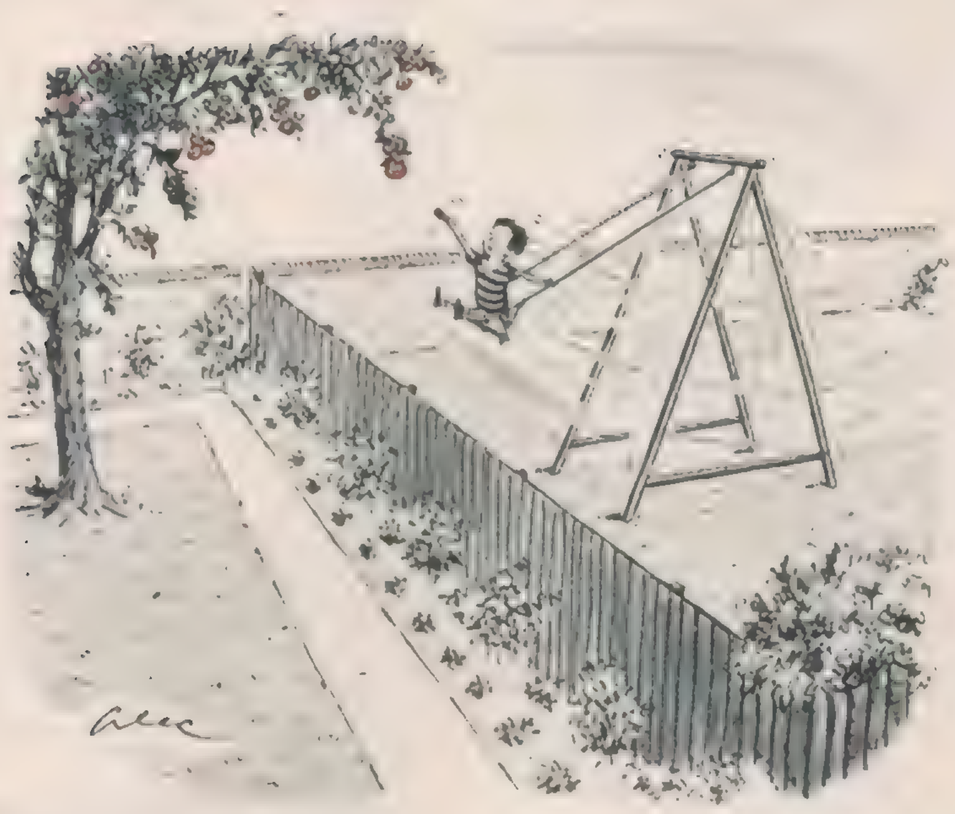
Swift



Amnesia for two

Continued from page 21

gate. He was quite sober, too. But from the way Thérèse carried on, he might have been out all night with the chorus of the Folies Bergère. Her shrill voice battered on my ears until three o'clock in the morning. How Sam could stand it was more than I could understand.

He called on me a couple of days later and seemed to drink in the peace of the Mas des Violettes. "It's the most wonderful spot I know in the entire world," he said with real feeling. "I don't blame you for not wanting to sell. But even if you were willing," he added sadly, "I couldn't buy, now.

"Just between ourselves, Bill," he went on, "I've had about as much as I can take. I suppose you haven't got a hundred bucks you can spare? Because if you have, there's a freighter leaving Marseilles tomorrow for Boston and I'm sailing in her. I've got to, Bill, or she'll drive me nuts."

I lent Sam the money he needed and early the following morning drove him down to catch the Marseilles train. We shook hands, wished each other luck, and that was that.

FIFTEEN minutes after I returned home, Alphonsine announced that Thérèse was at the front gate and was demanding to see me. It was a massive iron gate with sharp spikes on the top. "Tell her to go away," I said. "I don't want to see her now, or at any other time."

Thérèse went on rattling the gate until I threatened to send for the police to have her removed. I didn't admit it to myself, but I see now that I was scared of Thérèse.

This all occurred at the turn of 1938 and 1939. Eight years were destined to pass before I saw either the Mas des Violettes or Thérèse again. Neither occupied my thoughts during the intervening war years. The Mas des Violettes, since I could not foresee a time when I would be able to live there, was by way of being a white elephant.

A Swiss friend was able to pay Alphonsine a little money during the war, but she and Thérèse maintained their enmity undiminished. Thérèse, because she was the type, collaborated, first with the Italians and then with the Germans, and when an American detachment marched up the hill in the summer of 1944 to use the house as an observation point, there was an American flag draped over the front gate. I don't doubt that, somewhere in the house, just in case of accidents, there was a red flag.

I came back to look at my property in early 1947. Although I dreaded telling Alphonsine, I was now determined to sell the place. I met Thérèse in the village the first day, although I tried to dodge her.

"Where is Sam?" she wanted to know.

"I don't know," I replied, "and I haven't seen him or heard from him for more than eight years."

"I don't believe you," she snapped.

"Madame," I replied, "it is a matter of complete indifference to me whether you believe me or not. Good day!"

I learned from Alphonsine that Thérèse's uncle, the speculative builder, was staying with her and that the land had been sub-divided, preparatory to selling building lots. It was planned to erect eighty-odd houses there. Thérèse had applied to the courts for leave to presume Sam's death.

One evening about ten o'clock, when I had been at the Mas des Violettes about a week, there came across the still night air a tremendous uproar in which Thérèse's fairground soprano was the dominant sound. Dogs barked. Two men were shouting angrily at each other and there was much banging of doors. A man's voice in a mixture of French and English was telling Thérèse a few home truths about herself which, alas, were too indelicate to be repeated here. There was, too, something familiar about the voice.

Some fifteen minutes later there came a ring at my gate. Switching on the outside light, I saw standing there a shabby-looking caricature of Sam. The man was roughly the same height and build. He had not shaved for a couple of days. He was carrying a raincoat and a cheap fibre suitcase.

"Hullo, Bill!" he said warmly. "Nice to see you. Can you put me up for the night? Thérèse has just given me the bum's rush and set the dogs on to me. She says I'm dead."

"Come in," I said, opening the gate. "You look as if a square meal wouldn't do you any harm."

Ten minutes later Sam—and I want to emphasize here that at this juncture I had no doubts about his identity—was sitting down to an omelet, some cold meat and salad, washed down with a carafe of good red wine.

"Let's talk in the morning," I suggested, hustling him off to bed.

Before Sam awoke in the morning Thérèse was at the front gate demanding to see me.

"What do you want?" I asked through the bars.

"A man came to my house last night and said that he was Sam," she said, sheets of greenish-blue flame crackling from her eyes.

I said nothing.

"Then he came here," she continued. "I saw him when you switched on the light. What did the man tell you?"

"Sam told me that you had turned him out of his house and had set the dogs on him," I replied.

"It is my house," she snarled. "The man was not Sam. Do you think that

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HEMOTABS

I would not know my own husband?"

"Please make less noise," I asked her. "Sam is trying to sleep. But when he wakes I shall take him to a good lawyer who will stop you and your uncle from stealing his property."

Thérèse hit the roof. I hope that some of the things she called me were not true. Then she demanded to see Sam.

"You say Sam is dead," I reminded her, "so how can you see him?"

In her rage she reminded me of a caged gorilla rattling the bars. Then, awakened by the uproar, Sam came down wearing one of my bathrobes. "Hullo, Thérèse," he said amiably. "Just as beautiful and as sweet-tempered as ever, I see. What do you want?" he added less amiably.

"I want to talk with you."

"It's too late," replied Sam. "I wanted to talk to you last night, but what did you do? You set the dogs on me—you and that fat thief of an uncle of yours. You can't talk to me any more. You'll have to talk to the judge. Half of that property is mine and I want it."

If Thérèse had had a deadly weapon in her hand, I am convinced that she would have used it, first on Sam and then on me. She danced with rage. We left her and went in to breakfast.

Alphonsine arrived with coffee and rolls. "If it isn't too much trouble," said Sam, "I wonder if I could have tea. Coffee never has agreed with me."

It was at this point that suspicion first entered my mind. Hitherto it had not occurred to me to doubt that this was Sam. But now I began to wonder because Sam—and I remembered this clearly—had been a heavy coffee-drinker. I said nothing, but from then on I was on my guard.

Alphonsine accepted him without question. "The poor Monsieur Bolton," she said after breakfast. "One can see that he has suffered."

Sam and I went to a lawyer that morning. Sam stated his case and the lawyer promised to make sure that the presumption of death was blocked. This would effectively prevent Thérèse and her uncle proceeding with the sale of lots. "Naturally," the lawyer added, "I shall require proof of your identity. In the first instance, your passport will be enough."

Sam looked uncomfortable. "The fact is," he said, "that when I ran away from Thérèse my name *was* Sam Bolton, but as soon as I got back to the States I changed it. My passport, don't you see, is in the new name—my mother's maiden name."

The atmosphere in the lawyer's office became glacial. "That's a bit awkward, isn't it, Sam?" I said.

"Surely not!" he replied easily. "You know I'm Sam Bolton, don't you? What's to prevent you from going into court to say so?"

"I'm sorry, Sam," I said, "but I don't know that you are Sam Bolton. I think you are, but the court would want more than that."

"Perhaps," interposed the lawyer, "you gentlemen would care to discuss this and resolve any doubts before you discuss it again with me. But I must warn you that the identification should be quite positive."

"Naturally, naturally!" I agreed, hustling Sam out of the office.

"If you had any doubts, Bill," said Sam when we were outside, "why in blazes didn't you say so before?"

"It didn't occur to me, Sam," I replied, "that you were counting on me for identification. After all, we haven't seen each other for eight years and even then, if you cast your mind back, we only knew each other for a short time. And, well, I'm just not prepared to go oath as to your identity. Frankly, Sam, I don't think you should put me in this position.

"But," I added, "if you are prepared to submit to some kind of cross-examination from me, and if you can set all my doubts at rest, I'll be only too glad to go into court and swear that you are the Sam Bolton I knew and who married Thérèse."

He looked crestfallen at this, but agreed to submit to my questions.

"You know, Sam," I said on the drive home, "you shouldn't need my identification. Why not get a handwriting expert to compare your signature with that on your marriage contract and on the deeds of your house?"

"I injured my right hand some years ago," replied Sam, "and I now write with my left hand."

"Then why not have one of your family come over here to swear to your identity.

"I quarrelled with them all . . . over Thérèse. I wouldn't care to ask them any favours."

So it was with everything I suggested. He had a cast-iron reason why every suggestion was impracticable.

All of which had a strange effect upon me. With my conscious, critical mind, I suspected the man of being an impostor. I admit that. But whenever my mind was, so to speak, caught off guard, it did not occur to me to doubt that this was in fact Sam Bolton.

For want of a better way of expressing it, I believe that every human being has an aura and that this aura, probably because of its vagueness and lack of detail, cannot be counterfeited. This man, I more or less knew, had the aura of Sam Bolton.

But, against that, Sam Bolton had been a heavy coffee-drinker.

I questioned him that evening with utterly unsatisfactory results. He remembered many things which he might have been expected to forget, while he forgot some things which should have been printed indelibly on his memory. For example, here is one question I asked him and his reply. "What was Thérèse doing when you first saw her?"

"That's easy," he replied. "She was stroking her hips downwards with the same kind of motion women use to stop their suspender belts from riding up . . . only it was more graceful."

Now this could have been true, but I expected him to tell me that she had been banging away at the keys of a

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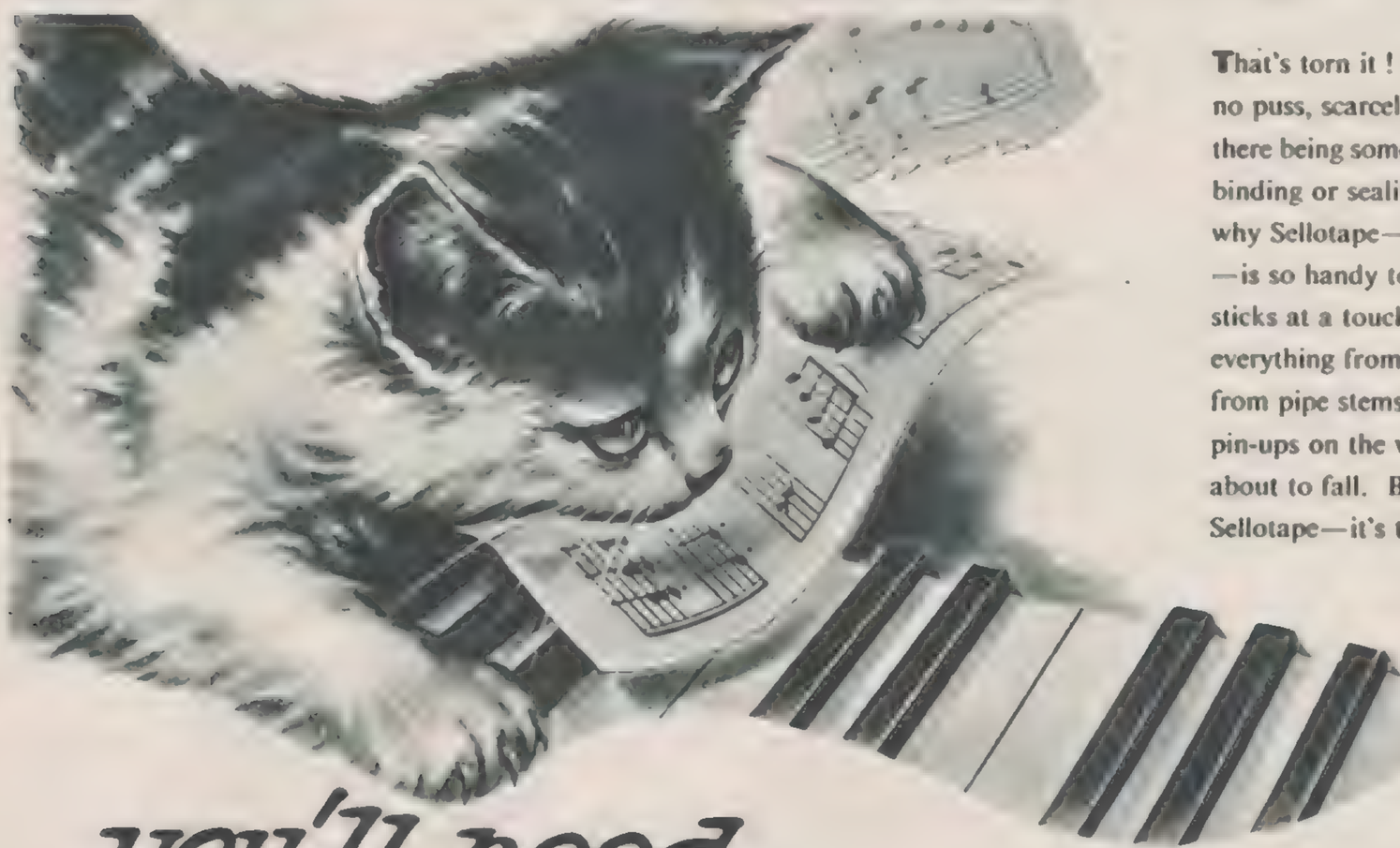

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cash register. That would have been my reply. But Sam had been in love with her and, therefore, more liable to remember those lean, serpentine hips than the cash register.

This left me with the choice of believing that Sam—if he was Sam—had told me the simple truth; or that his reply had been diabolically clever by presenting me with a substitute for the truth, but a substitute which did not conflict with the truth. Either way, it was inconclusive.

I was preparing a list of written trick questions for him when a telegram recalled me to London. My parting promise to him was that, if he could convince me, I would come down specially to testify for him.

The written answers arrived in London two days after I did. They left me as undecided as ever.

My frame of mind is reflected in my letter to him:

Dear Sam (if you are Sam):

I think it only fair to warn you that if you call me to testify as to your identity, my evidence may do you more harm than good. I am prepared to go the whole way just short of positive identification. . . .

The upshot of this was that I was asked to appear, from which I concluded that if I were his star witness he must have a weak case.

Two months later I was called. Examined by Sam's lawyer, I went as far as I decently could. Much as I disliked Thérèse, I was not prepared to perjure myself in order to upset her scheme.

Her lawyer took a most telling line in cross-examination. "You say, monsieur, that you are almost sure," he asked, "that the plaintiff is the Monsieur Sam Bolton whom you knew years ago?"

"I do."

"The complete certainty of Madame Bolton that this man is an impostor does not shake you, monsieur?"

"Not in the least," I replied. "I believe that Madame Bolton would testify what it was to her advantage to testify, regardless of the truth. Her certainty, therefore, does not impress me."

The court, and rightly, reprimanded me for that. "You admit, do you not, monsieur," asked the lawyer, pressing home his advantage, "that you are prejudiced against Madame Bolton?"

"Very much so," I replied, "but not to the degree that would make me swear falsely."

Then Sam's lawyer asked permission to put one more question to me. "It has become fashionable in recent years," he said, "to express many things, including degrees of certainty, in terms of percentages. Would you be so good as to tell the court in those terms your percentage of certainty that this man," he pointed to Sam, "is Monsieur Sam Bolton and the husband of Madame Bolton, who seeks leave to presume his death?"

"You may call my identification ninety-eight per cent certain," I replied.

But it was the odd two per cent of uncertainty which, unfortunately, lost the case for Sam. We had dinner together that evening and, all things considered, I thought he accepted the verdict philosophically. I wished I had been better able to help him because he made no effort to coach me, or urge me to colour my testimony in his favour.

Having put the Mas des Violettes into the hands of an agent for sale, I returned to London believing that I had heard the last of Sam and Thérèse.

That was in 1947. Some time in 1948 I received an offer for the house. The agent told me that the prospective buyer would probably pay more. He was a rich American who had made a fortune in Venezuela. Two weeks later the house was sold for a very high price.

Soon after that Alphonsine wrote to tell me that eighty-odd houses had been built upon the La Bastide property, but that Thérèse's uncle, being pretty slick, had got away with the major share of the loot. Thérèse was still living in the same house which, instead of standing in a smiling olive grove, was surrounded by nasty little stucco villas. She was stretching her small income by taking boarders.

It was not until the summer of 1955 that I again visited the French Riviera. I was strolling down the Boulevard Carnot in Cannes when a large, expensive-looking car came silently alongside me and stopped. At the wheel was Sam. "Hallo, Bill," he said. "Nice to see you again. How's tricks?"

"Hallo, Sam," I replied, "that is, if you are Sam."

"Well, call me ninety-eight per cent Sam," he said with a grin. "Free for lunch?"

We drove up into the hills and the big car glided through the open gates of—yes, the Mas des Violettes. "The most beautiful, peaceful spot in the whole world," Sam said with deep contentment. This was one love which had not wavered over the years.

In the house were fine pictures, exquisite Persian rugs and the kind of Provençal furniture that belonged in a museum. Everywhere were evidences of wealth.

"You seem to have done pretty well for yourself, Sam," I remarked. "Did you break the bank at Monte Carlo?"

"No, in Venezuelan oil leases."

"Do you still call yourself Sam Bolton?"

"Fancy you remembering that!" he said. "Let me introduce you to Sam Waters, late of Caracas, Venezuela. Very unhealthy country, Venezuela is. That's where I must have picked up that attack of amnesia which gave me the mad idea that I was Sam Bolton. . . ."

I knew then for certain that he was in fact the old original Sam, and I knew why he'd given me only ninety-eight per cent proof of the fact. He'd deliberately made me an uncertain witness, to ensure his losing the case. He'd had to lose it, to be free of Thérèse.

He must have been a rich man then, when he came back to France in 1947. And, knowing Thérèse's nose for money, it wasn't difficult to see why he should want her to have no claim on him at all.

"You know, Sam," I remarked thoughtfully, "it might have been awkward if, instead of losing that lawsuit, you had won it."

"Don't say such things, Bill, not even in fun," he said with a shudder. "Just fancy being married to that terrifying woman next door. Funny thing about her, by the way, is that she has amnesia now. Must have caught it from me."

"What makes you say that, Sam?" I asked.

"Well, although she swore on a stack of Bibles that she'd never seen me before in her life, she now says that she was married to me. If she isn't careful, she'll be getting herself into trouble. . . . Very nasty thing, amnesia."

"I think it's a great pity she ever left that hotel in Normandy," I said. "She was as happy as a lark hammering away all day at that cash register."

"What a beautiful touch she had!" said Sam reminiscently. THE END

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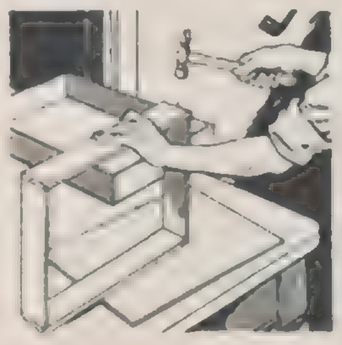

TO hold baby's powder tins, bottles and brushes, I built a neat stand from wood and hardboard. First I made two trays, using 1¼ in. by ¾ in. deal for the sides and hardboard for the bases. The stand legs I made from 1¼ in. by ¾ in. deal, jointing them with oblique half laps. By drawing round standard sized bottles and tins I marked and then cut out a piece of hardboard to complete the top tray. Finally I fitted a ½ in. dowel rail to hold towels and nappies, and screwed the legs to the sides of the trays.—*G. Taylor, Collingwood Avenue, Wallsend, Northumberland.*

Dead man's folly

Continued from page 26

dust on the floor. At this Poirot looked for some time.

He knelt down and, taking a little yard measure from his pocket, measured its dimensions carefully. Then he nodded his head in a satisfied fashion.

He slipped out quietly, shutting the door behind him. Then he pursued an oblique course through the rhododendron bushes. He worked his way up the hill in this way and came out a short time afterwards on the path which led to the little stone temple called the Folly and down from there to the boathouse.

He did not visit the Folly this time, but went on down the zigzagging way until he reached the boathouse. He had the key with him and he opened the door and went in.

Except for the removal of the body, and of the tea tray with its glass and plate, it was just as he remembered it. The police had noted and photographed all that it contained.

He went over now to the table where a pile of comics lay. He turned them over and his expression was not unlike Inspector Bland's had been as he noted the words Marlene had doodled down there before she died. *Johnny goes with Kate, Georgie Porge kisses hikers in the wood.*

He found the remarks pathetic in their young crudity. He remembered Marlene's plain, rather spotty face. He suspected that boys had not pinched Marlene at the pictures. Frustrated, Marlene had got a vicarious thrill by spying and snooping on her young contemporaries.

She had spied on people, she had seen things; things that she was not meant to have seen—things, usually, of small importance—but on one occasion perhaps something of more importance? Something of whose importance she herself had no idea.

It was all conjecture, and Poirot shook his head doubtfully. He replaced the pile of comics neatly on the table, his passion for tidiness always in the ascendant. As he did so he was suddenly assailed with the feeling of something missing. What was it? Something that *ought* to have been there. . . . Something—he shook his head as the elusive impression faded.

He went slowly out of the boathouse, unhappy and displeased with himself. He, Hercule Poirot, had been summoned to prevent a murder—and he had not prevented it. It had happened. What was even more humiliating was that he had no real idea, even now, as to what had really happened.

It was ignominious. And tomorrow he must return to London defeated. His ego was seriously deflated—even his moustache drooped. . . .

It was a fortnight later that Inspector Bland had a long and unsatisfying interview with the chief constable of the county.

Major Merrall had irritable, tufted eyebrows and looked rather like an angry terrier. But his men all liked him and respected his judgment.

"Well, well, well!" said Major Merrall. "What have we got? Nothing that we can act on. This fellow de Sousa, now. We can't connect him in any way with the Girl Guide. If Lady Stubbs's body had turned up, that would have been different." He puffed at his pipe. "You think there is a body, don't you, Bland?"

"What do you think, sir?"

"Oh, I agree with you. Otherwise, we'd have traced her by now. Unless, of course, she'd made her plans very carefully, and I don't see the least indication of that. She'd no money, you know. We've been into all the financial side of it. Sir George had the money. He made her a very generous allowance, but she'd not got a stiver of her own. And there's no trace of a lover. No rumour of one, no gossip—and there would be, mark you, in a country district like that."

He took a turn up and down the floor. "The plain fact of it is that we

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don't know. We *think* de Sousa, for some unknown reason of his own, made away with his cousin. The most probable thing is that he got her to meet him down at the boathouse, took her aboard the launch and pushed her overboard. You've tested that could happen?"

"Good lord, sir, you could drown a whole boatful of people during holiday time in the river or on the seashore. Nobody'd think anything of it. They all spend their time squealing and pushing each other off things. But the thing de Sousa *didn't* know about was that the girl was in the boathouse with nothing to do, and ten to one was looking out of the window."

"Hoskins looked out of the window and watched the performance you put up, and you didn't see him?"

"No, sir. You'd have no idea anyone was in that boathouse unless they came out on the balcony and showed themselves——"

"PERHAPS the girl did come out on the balcony. De Sousa realizes she's seen what he's doing, so he comes ashore and deals with her, gets her to let him into the boathouse by asking her what she's doing there. She tells him, pleased with her part in the murder hunt, he puts the cord round her neck in a playful manner—and whooosh—" Major Merrall made an expressive gesture with his hands—"that's that! Okay, Bland, okay! Let's say that's how it happened. We haven't got a body and, if we attempted to detain de Sousa, we'd have a hornet's nest about our ears. We'll have to let him go."

"Is he going, sir?"

"He's laying up his yacht a week from now. Going back to his blasted island."

"So we haven't got much time," said Inspector Bland gloomily.

"There are other possibilities, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, sir, there are several *possibilities*. I still hold to it that she must have been murdered by somebody who was in on the facts of the murder hunt. We can clear two people completely—Sir George Stubbs and Captain Warburton, the M.P.'s agent. They were running shows on the lawn and taking charge of things the entire afternoon. They are vouched for by dozens of people. The same applies to Mrs. Masterton, the Member's wife.

"Then there's Mrs. Oliver," said Bland. "She devised the murder hunt. She's rather eccentric and she was on her own for a good part of the afternoon. Then there's Mr. Alec Legge."

"Fellow that lives in the pink cottage, eh?"

"Yes. He left the show fairly early on, or he wasn't seen there. He says he got fed up with it and walked back to his cottage. On the other hand old Merdell—that's the old boy down at the quay who looks after people's boats for them and helps them with the parking—he says Alec Legge passed him going back to the cottage about five o'clock. Not earlier. That leaves about an hour of his time unaccounted for. He says, of course, that Merdell has no idea of time and was quite wrong as to when he saw him. And, after all, the old man *is* ninety-two."

"Rather unsatisfactory," said Major Merrall. "No motive or anything of that kind to tie Legge in?"

"He might have been having an affair with Lady Stubbs," said Bland, doubtfully, "and she might have been threatening to tell his wife, and he might have done her in, and the girl might have seen it happen——"

"And he concealed Lady Stubbs's body somewhere?"

"Yes. But I'm blessed if I know how or where. My men have searched the grounds at Nasse and there's no trace anywhere of disturbed earth, and I should say that by now we've rooted under every bush there is. Still, say he did manage to hide the body, he could have thrown her hat into the river as a blind. And Marlene Tucker saw him and so he disposed of her. That part of it's always the same."

Inspector Bland said: "And, of course, there's Legge's wife——"

"What have we got on her?"

"She wasn't in the tea-tent from four to half-past as she says she was," said Inspector Bland slowly. "And that's the particular, vital half-hour."

Again he paused. "Then there's young Michael Weyman, the architect chap who was staying at Nasse. It's difficult to tie him up with it in any way, but he's what I should call a *likely* murderer—one of those cocky, nervy young fellows. Would kill anyone and not turn a hair about it. In with a loose set, I shouldn't wonder."

"You're so damned respectable, Bland," said Major Merrall. "How does he account for his movements?"

"Very vague, sir! Very vague indeed! Doesn't know where he was or when, and there's nobody who seems to have seen him. There *is* some evidence that Lady Stubbs was keen on him."

"I suppose you're hinting at one of these sex murders?"

"I'm only looking about for what I can find, sir," said Inspector Bland with dignity. "And then there's Miss Brewis, Sir George's secretary. She admits quite openly that she was in the boathouse at about the time the murder must have been committed."

"Would she do that if she was guilty?"

"She might," said Inspector Bland, slowly. "Actually it's the best thing she could do. You see, if she picks up a tray with cake and a fruit drink and tells everyone she's taking that for the child down there, as she did—well, then, her presence is accounted for. She goes there and comes back and says the girl was alive at that time. We've taken her word for it. But if you remember, sir, and look again at the medical evidence, Dr. Cook's time of death is between four o'clock and a quarter to five. We've only Miss Brewis's word for it that Marlene was alive at a quarter-past four.

"And there's one curious point that came up about her testimony. She told me that it was Lady Stubbs who told her to take cakes and a drink to Marlene, but another witness said quite definitely that that wasn't the sort of thing that Lady Stubbs would think about. And I think, you know, that they're right there. Lady Stubbs was a dumb beauty wrapped up in herself and her own appearance. She never seems to have ordered meals or taken an interest in household management. The more I think of it, the more it seems most unlikely that she *should* have told Miss Brewis to take anything to the Girl Guide."

"You know, Bland," said Merrall, "you've got something there. But what's her motive, if so?"

"No motive for killing the girl," said Bland, "but I do think, you know, that she might have a motive for killing Lady Stubbs. According to Monsieur Poirot, whom I told you about, she's head over heels in love with her employer.

"Supposing she followed Lady Stubbs into the woods and killed her, and that Marlene Tucker, bored in the boathouse, came out and happened to see it? Then of course she'd have to kill Marlene too.

"What would she do next? Put the girl's body in the boathouse, come back to the house, fetch the tray and go down to the boathouse again. Then she's covered her own absence from the fête and we've got *her* testimony, our only reliable testimony on the face of it, that Marlene Tucker was alive at a quarter-past four."

"Well," said Major Merrall with a sigh, "keep after it, Bland. Keep after it. What do you think she did with Lady Stubbs's body, if she's the guilty party?"

"Hid it in the woods, buried it, or threw it into the river."

"The last would be rather difficult, wouldn't it?"

"It depends where the murder was committed," said the inspector. "She's quite a hefty woman. If it was not far from the boathouse, she *could* have carried her down there and thrown her off the edge of the quay."

"With every pleasure steamer on the Helm looking on?"

"It would be just another piece of horseplay. Risky, but possible. But I think it far more likely myself that she hid the body somewhere, and just threw the hat into the Helm.

"It's possible, you see, that she, knowing the house and grounds very well, might know some place where you could conceal a body. She may have managed to dispose of it in the river later. Who knows? That is, of course, if she did it," added Inspector Bland as an afterthought. "But actually, sir, I stick to de Sousa——"

Major Merrall had been noting down points on a pad. He looked up now, clearing his throat. "It comes to this, then. We've got five or six people who *could* have killed Marlene Tucker. Some of them are more likely than others, but that's as far as we can go. In a general way, we know why she was killed. She was killed because she saw something. But until we know exactly what it was she saw, we don't know who killed her."

"Put like that, you make it sound a bit difficult, sir."

"Oh, it *is* difficult. But we shall get there—in the end."

"And meantime that chap will have left England—laughing up his sleeve—having got away with two murders."

"You're fairly sure about him, aren't you? I don't say you're wrong. All the same——"

The chief constable was silent for a moment or two, then he said with a shrug of his shoulders: "Anyway, it's better than having one of these psychopathic murderers. We'd probably be having a third murder on our hands by now."

"They do say things go in threes," said the inspector gloomily.

He repeated that remark the following morning when he heard that old Merdell, the ferryman, returning home from a visit to his favourite pub across the river at Gitcham, must have exceeded his usual potations and fallen in the river when boarding the quay. His boat was found adrift, and the old man's body was recovered that evening.

The inquest was short and simple. The night had been dark and overcast, old Merdell had had three pints of beer; and, after all, he was ninety-two.

The verdict brought in was accidental death. . . .

HERCULE POIROT sat before a jigsaw puzzle in his London flat. In front of him were various pieces which, studied separately, looked as if they could not have any conceivable function in a sane world. Assembled in their proper place, however, they not only made sense: they made a picture.

It was an occupation which, Poirot reflected, had a certain resemblance to his own profession. There, too, one was faced with various improbably-shaped and unlikely facts which, though seeming to bear no relationship to each other, yet did each have its properly balanced part in assembling the whole. His fingers deftly picked up an improbable piece of dark grey and fitted it into a blue sky. It was, he now perceived, part of an aeroplane.

"Yes," murmured Poirot to himself, "that is what one must do. The unlikely piece here, the improbable piece there, the oh-so-rational piece that is not what it seems; all of these have their appointed place, and once they are fitted in—*eh bien!* there is an end of the business. All is clear. All is—as they say nowadays—*in the picture*."

He fitted in, in rapid succession, a small piece of a minaret, another piece that looked as though it was part of a striped awning and was actually the backside of a cat, and a missing piece of sunset that had changed with Turneresque suddenness from orange to pink.

"If one knew what to look for, it would be so easy," said Hercule Poirot to himself. "But one does not know what to look for. And so one looks in the wrong places, or for the wrong things."

He sighed vexedly. His eyes strayed from the jigsaw puzzle in front of him to the chair on the other side of the fireplace. There, not half an hour ago, Inspector Bland had sat consuming tea and crumpets and talking sadly. He had had to come to London on police business and, that police business having been accomplished, he had come to call upon Monsieur Poirot.

He had wondered, he explained, whether Monsieur Poirot had any ideas. He had then proceeded to explain his

"Been closed down for days. Chap who switches it all on is away with 'flu"

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own ideas. On every point he outlined, Poirot had agreed with him. Inspector Bland, so Poirot thought, had made a very fair and unprejudiced survey of the case.

It was now a month, nearly five weeks, since the occurrences at Nasse House. It had been five weeks of stagnation. Lady Stubbs's body had not been recovered. Lady Stubbs, if living, had not been traced. The odds, Inspector Bland pointed out, were strongly against her being alive. Poirot agreed with him.

"Of course," said Bland, "the body might not have been washed up. There's no telling with a body once it's in the water. It *may* show up yet, though it will be pretty unrecognizable when it does."

"There is a third possibility," Poirot pointed out.

Bland nodded. "Yes," he said, "I've thought of that. I keep thinking of that, in fact. You mean the body's there—at Nasse, hidden somewhere where we've never thought of looking? It could be, you know. It just could be. With an old house, and with grounds like that, there are places that you'd never know were there. A secret passage—anything."

"It is possible, yes," said Poirot. "And the person who would certainly know about such a thing would be Mrs. Folliat."

Mrs. Folliat, he thought, knew all there was to know about Nasse House. Mrs. Folliat knew a great deal. Mrs. Folliat had known straight away that Hattie Stubbs was dead. . . .

Mrs. Folliat, thought Poirot vexedly, was the key to the whole business. But Mrs. Folliat, he reflected, was a key that would not easily turn in the lock.

The inspector had finished his tea, and sighed and gone, and Poirot got out his jigsaw puzzle to alleviate his mounting exasperation. For he was exasperated. Both exasperated and humiliated.

He passed from the jigsaw of painted wood and cardboard to the jigsaw of a murder problem. He took a notebook from his pocket and wrote in small neat characters: *Etienne de Sousa, Amanda Brewis, Alec Legge, Peggy Legge, Michael Weyman.*

It was physically impossible for Sir George or Jim Warburton to have killed Marlene Tucker. Since it was not physically impossible for Mrs. Oliver to have done so, he added her name after a brief space. He also put down *Boy in turtle shirt* with a query mark after it. This was the young hiker whom he had found acting suspiciously near the Folly.

Then he smiled, shook his head, took a pin from the lapel of his jacket, shut his eyes and stabbed at the paper with it. It was as good a way as any other, he thought.

He was justifiably annoyed when the pin proved to have transfixed the last entry. "I am an imbecile," said Hercule Poirot. "What has a boy in a turtle shirt to do with this?"

But he also realized that he must have had some reason for including this enigmatic character in his list. He recalled again the day he had sat in the Folly, and the surprise on the boy's face at seeing him there. Not a very pleasant face, despite the youthful good looks. An arrogant, ruthless face.

The young man had come to meet someone, and it followed that that someone was a person whom he could not meet, or did not wish to meet, in the ordinary way. It was a meeting, in fact, to which attention must not be called. A guilty meeting. Something to do with the murder . . . ?

"I know a good deal," said Hercule Poirot to himself, "I have in my hands many, many pieces of this jigsaw. I have an idea of the kind of crime this was—but it must be that I am not looking at it the right way."

He turned a page of his notebook and wrote: *Did Lady Stubbs ask Miss Brewis to take refreshments to Marlene? If not, why does Miss Brewis say that she did?*

He considered the point. Miss Brewis might quite easily herself have thought of taking cake and a fruit drink to the girl. But if so why did she not simply say so? Why lie about Lady Stubbs having asked her to do so? Could this be because Miss Brewis went to the boathouse and found Marlene dead?

He stared for some time at the questions he had written. He could not help feeling that somewhere in those words was some vital pointer to the truth that had escaped him.

After four or five minutes of thought he wrote down something more. *Etienne de Sousa declares that he wrote to his cousin, Lady Stubbs, three weeks before his arrival at Nasse House. Is that statement true or false?*

Poirot felt almost certain that it was false. He recalled the scene at the breakfast table. There seemed no earthly reason why Sir George or Lady Stubbs should pretend to a surprise and, in the latter's case, a dismay, which they did not feel. He could see no purpose to be accomplished by it.

Granting, however, that Etienne de Sousa had lied, why did he lie? To give the impression that his visit had been announced and welcomed? It might be so, but it seemed a very doubtful reason. There was certainly no *evidence* that such a letter had ever been written or received.

Poirot tried to remember exactly what Lady Stubbs had said to him that morning. "He is a bad man. He does wicked things." And, according to Bland, she had said to her husband: "He kills people."

There was something rather significant about that. On the day that Etienne de Sousa had come to Nasse House, one person certainly had been killed, possibly two people.

Mrs. Folliat had said that one should pay no attention to these melodramatic remarks of Hattie's. She had said so very insistently. Mrs. Folliat. . . .

Hercule Poirot frowned, then brought his hand down with a bang on the arm of his chair.

"Always, always—I return to Mrs. Folliat. She is the key to the whole business. If I knew what she knows . . . I can no longer sit in an armchair and just think. No, I must take a train and go again to Devon and visit Mrs. Folliat. . . ."

Hercule Poirot paused for a moment outside the big wrought-iron gates of Nasse House. At his left was the small, white porticoed Lodge.

Poirot rapped gently upon the door. After a few moments' delay he heard footsteps inside. They sounded to his ear slow and almost hesitant. Then the door was opened and Mrs. Folliat stood framed in the doorway. He was startled to see how old and frail she looked.

She stared at him incredulously for a moment or two. Then she said: "Monsieur Poirot! You!"

He thought for a moment that he had seen fear leap into her eyes, but perhaps that was sheer imagination on his part. He said politely: "May I come in, madame?"

"But of course."

She had recovered all her old poise now, beckoned him in, and led the way into her small sitting-room. There were some delicate Chelsea figures on the mantelpiece, a couple of chairs covered in exquisite *petit point*. A Derby tea service stood on the small table.

Mrs. Folliat said: "I will fetch another cup."

She went out of the room. He looked round him once more. A piece of needlework, a *petit point* chair seat, lay on a table with a needle sticking in it. Against the wall was a bookcase. There was a little cluster of miniatures on the wall and a faded photograph in a silver frame of a man in uniform with a stiff moustache and a weak chin.

Mrs. Folliat came back into the room with a cup and saucer in her hand.

Poirot said: "Your husband, madame?"

"Yes." Then, noticing that Poirot's eyes swept along the top of the bookcase as though in search of further photographs, she added brusquely: "I'm not fond of photographs. They make one live in the past too much. One must learn to forget. One must cut away the dead wood."

Poirot remembered how, the first time he had seen Mrs. Folliat, she had been clipping with secateurs at a shrub. She had said then, he remembered, something about dead wood. He looked at her thoughtfully, appraising her character. An enigmatical woman, he thought, a woman who, in spite of the gentleness of her appearance, had a side to her that could be ruthless. A woman who could cut away dead wood not only from plants but from her own life. . . .

She handed him his cup and said conversationally: "I was surprised to see you. Somehow I did not imagine you would be passing through this part of the world again."

"I am not exactly passing through," said Poirot. "My visit to this part of the world is intentional." He paused. "I came here partly to see you, madame.

"First of all—there has been no news of the young Lady Stubbs?"

"There was a body washed up the other day in Cornwall," she said. "George went there to see if he could identify it, but it was not her." She added: "I am very sorry for George. The strain has been very great."

"Does he still believe that his wife may be alive?"

Slowly Mrs. Folliat shook her head. "I think," she said, "that he has given up hope. After all, if Hattie were alive, she couldn't possibly conceal herself successfully with the whole of the press and the police looking for her. Even if something like loss of memory had happened to her, well, surely the police or somebody would have found her by now?"

"It would seem so, yes," said Poirot. "And the murdered girl? There have been no developments there?"

"Not that I know of." She added: "It seems a senseless crime—absolutely pointless. Poor child. . . ."

"It still upsets you, I see, to think of her, madame."

Mrs. Folliat did not reply for a moment or two. Then she said: "We old folks expect to die, but that child had her life before her."

Poirot frowned. Then he said: "Although, as you say, we old folk must expect to die, we do not really want to. At least, *I* do not want to. I find life very interesting still."

"I don't think that I do." She spoke more to herself than to him. "I am very tired, Monsieur Poirot. I shall be not only ready but thankful when my time comes."

He shot a quick glance at her. He wondered, as he had wondered before, whether it was a sick woman who sat talking to him, a woman who had perhaps the knowledge or even the certainty of approaching death. He could not otherwise account for the intense weariness and lassitude of her manner. That lassitude, he felt, was not really characteristic of the woman.

Amy Folliat, he felt, was a woman of character, energy and determination. She had lived through many troubles—loss of her home, loss of wealth, the death of her sons. All these, he felt, she had survived.

She had cut away the "dead wood," as she herself had expressed it. But there was something now in her life that she could not cut away, that no one could cut away for her. If it was not physical illness he did not see what it could be.

She gave a sudden little smile as though she were reading his thoughts. "Really, you know, I have not very much to live for, Monsieur Poirot," she said. "I have many friends but no near relations, no family."

"You have your home," said Poirot on an impulse.

"You mean Nasse? Yes. . . ."

"It is your home, isn't it, although technically it is the property of Sir George Stubbs? Now Sir George Stubbs has gone to London, you rule in his stead."

Again he saw the sharp look of fear in her eyes. When she spoke her voice held an icy edge to it.

"I don't quite know what you mean, Monsieur Poirot. I am grateful to Sir George for renting me this Lodge, but I *do* rent it. I pay him a yearly sum for it with the right to walk in the grounds."

Poirot spread out his hands. "I apologize, madame. I did not mean to offend you."

"No doubt I misunderstood you," said Mrs. Folliat coldly.

"It is a beautiful place," said Poirot. "A beautiful house, beautiful grounds. It has about it great peace, great serenity."

"Yes." Her face lightened. "We have always felt that. I felt it as a child when I first came here."

"But is there the same peace and serenity now, madame?"

"Why not?"

"Murder unavenged," said Poirot. "The spilling of innocent blood. Until that shadow lifts, there will be no peace." He added: "I think you know that, madame, as well as I do."

Mrs. Folliat did not answer. She neither moved nor spoke. She sat quite still and Poirot had no idea what she was thinking.

He leaned forward a little and spoke again.

"Madame, you know a good deal—perhaps everything—about this murder. You know who killed that girl—you know *why*. You know who killed Hattie Stubbs—and you know, perhaps, where her body lies now."

To be concluded next week

"Ever see 'Swan Lake'?"

GENIUS—5

Talk not of genius baffled.
Genius is master of man.
Genius does what it must, and
Talent does what it can.

Owen Meredith

Colour—key to The White House

Continued from page 27

was violent. Below the Mason-Dixon line, where the Confederates mobilized against Lincoln on the issue of Negro slavery nearly a hundred years ago, there are long, bitter memories. The descendants of the early settlers, mostly Anglo-Saxons, still cherish deep hatred against the Yankees whose ancestors brought death and ruin to the southern gentlemen in the middle of the nineteenth century.

They do not forget that, for twelve years after the Civil War, the South was a conquered province, patrolled by Negro troops and governed by Negro politicians in some parts.

Memories of this kind are not easily lost. It was against this background that William Faulkner, the Nobel Prize-winning novelist who plants cotton in Mississippi, warned that the white people of the South were so inflamed that they would go to any lengths.

"They will even accept another civil war," he said. And he sadly added: "If I have to choose between the United States Government and Mississippi, then I'll choose Mississippi. As long as there's a middle road, I'll be on it. But if it came to fighting, I'd fight for Mississippi against the United States even if it meant going out into the streets and shooting Negroes."

Faulkner thus exemplifies the way in which the moderates and the intellectuals of the South are being reluctantly but firmly driven to join forces with the white extremists. They are being so driven by the N.A.A.C.P.'s demand that the Supreme Court's no-segregation rulings shall be swiftly and universally observed in the United States.

The Negroes' impetuosity and determination are easy to sympathize with, for they have the law on their side, and the moral authority of the views of most of white mankind. And the rulings of the Supreme Court are in fact not being accepted in some of the seventeen southern states.

Seven of these states are side-stepping and dodging the Supreme Court edict. Five others are openly defiant; one is even challenging the right of the Supreme Court to interpret the Constitution. Only five, and the District of Columbia (the official title of Washington, the capital of the United States) are ending segregation.

For the ten million Negroes who still live in the South, segregation has been in practice from the cradle to the grave.

As they grow up, the Negroes, whose education was often restricted to rudimentary knowledge of the three Rs, find they are unwelcome in the polling booths. Some southern states imposed a poll tax to deter Negroes from claiming their franchise. Even those able to pay it had to undergo a rigged examination when they tried to register. If they attempted to enter the polling booth they were often intimidated and even beaten up.

Segregation extends even to religion, although the Methodists (and very many southern Negroes are Methodists) are now proposing to end it in their churches. Most of the coloured folk prefer their own places of worship and their own parsons. They feel out of place at the more conventional services in the white churches, preferring an emotional approach to religion. And in the past, the white pastors were often closely associated with the Ku Klux Klan. Today, many are leaders of the white-supremacy movement.

Normally the South is predominantly Protestant, but the Roman Catholics are strong in New Orleans and some other parts of Louisiana where the descendants of the French settlers still adhere to the faith of their fathers. Roman Catholics are by no means happy about the order to de-segregate issued by their Archbishop Rummel.

He holds that segregation is "morally wrong and sinful," and has threatened to excommunicate those who voted for legislation to prevent de-segregation in the schools. But one parish compelled a Negro priest to leave and in another a white woman was beaten by her neighbours because she taught the catechism to a mixed class of white and coloured children.

In spite of all such provocations, it is widely held that the N.A.A.C.P. is pressing its legal advantage too hard and too fast.

It has often been criticized for creating situations that lead to breaches of the peace. A good many people believed that Autherine Lucy was persuaded to make her abortive but highly dramatic bid for a place in all-white Alabama University to provide the N.A.A.C.P. with a first-class publicity stunt.

The association used its funds to provide a Cadillac for Miss Lucy who, after the riots on the campus, said: "I didn't intend to cause all this violence. I merely wanted an education."

She has since married a Negro pastor and presumably is no longer interested in having the N.A.A.C.P. use her as a guinea-pig. After her wedding she said:

"I am not a heroine. There are many people in Alabama whose ideals stem from very old-fashioned precepts and customs and I am sure few of those who were against my entry into the university meant to be vicious. But everybody knows what happened. The demonstrations shocked, horrified and frightened me. I wanted to stick to my guns but I did not want to start anything that might cause bad feelings and cost human lives. The whole thing grew beyond me. I was only a pawn. If it had not been me it would have been someone else."

One of the wisest of the Negro leaders is Robert Brooks, born in Ohio, a man who had wide experience of conditions in both North and South before settling in Aiken, a fashionable resort frequented by Northerners. Today, he is one of the officers of the N.A.A.C.P.

He doesn't expect any quick end to segregation in southern schools. "It will be ten years before there is any integration of the schools in South Carolina." His conclusion is that it is more important for Negroes to have economic opportunities and learn to participate more in civil affairs than to put their children into white schools.

This sort of sensible attitude has been taken elsewhere by both whites and Negroes. In Washington, segregation has virtually ended since the Supreme Court judgment. There was no fuss, and the new order seems to be working well. Yet in Virginia, across the river from Washington, the die-hards are threatening to close all public schools rather than allow Negroes into close daily contact with white children. The idea is that if they are re-opened as private schools for fee-paying students—white only—the Supreme Court can be defied.

But then again, in Richmond, Virginia, Negro women won a bloodless victory against the big stores of the town. It was traditional for shop assistants to give priority to white customers, while Negroes were kept waiting. The Negro women met and decided that on one day a week they would visit the stores as usual, but would buy nothing. They tried on hats and shoes, closely inspected all the goods displayed for sale, and walked out empty handed. The shops capitulated in the third week, and their sales staffs were ordered to end discrimination.

But this is contrary to the general trend. In a number of places in the North and in those parts of the South where the Negroes outnumber the whites, prejudice and unreason have taken over.

Basically the problem is one of fear. Many southerners admit this without hesitation. They fear the growing economic power of the Negro. Even more, they fear that Negroes will wrest political power from the whites, at least in districts where they are numerically preponderant.

Underlying these fears is the fear of mixed marriages and of sexual relationships generally between Negro men and white women.

This fear continues to manifest itself through the South.

It is fostered and perpetuated by the diehard whites. Down in Tennessee banners were being borne in parades emblazoned with such battle cries as "GOD THE ORIGINAL SEGREGATIONIST" and "SEGREGATION OR WAR."

But all the wild threats do not come from the South. In Ohio, Senator George Bender advocated the sending of troops to keep order in Mississippi.

It is in this emotional atmosphere that the colour question is being used to sway elections which are of vital importance, not only to the United States, but to all the nations of the Western alliance.

Yet, even in the South, not all the portents are alarming. Last April four white men leaped on to the stage of a theatre at Birmingham, Alabama, and attacked the coloured jazz singer Nat "King" Cole.

The men were arrested, charged and sentenced to the maximum penalty—a fine of a hundred dollars and six months in jail. Most people in the South were deeply shocked by the assault upon Cole, and public apologies were made to the singer. The judge who sentenced the white men remarked of Cole that "his conduct was such as to win him new friends in the South."

Everybody praised him; in fact, except his own people. It is a wry comment on the confusion into which the colour question has thrust America, that the only criticism of Cole came from Negro leaders. They condemned him for performing "before a segregated audience." THE END

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

There's a perilous seat for newly-weds poised high above the Cornish seas

Legend traces the origin of St. Michael's Mount to Cormoran, the Cornish giant, who built it in the sea of granite rocks which he made his wife, Cormelian, fetch from far inland.

After bringing several loads of granite, Cormelian spied a rock lying by the shore and popped that into her apron. Cormoran, enraged by her laziness, gave her a mighty kick. Her apron string broke and out rolled the rock into the sea where it has remained ever since. It is called the Chapel Rock.

Another legend dates from A.D. 495 when some fishermen beheld a vision of the Archangel Michael standing upon a ledge suffused with a heavenly light. The ledge is pointed out by the guides to this day.

Throughout medieval times the Mount was a place of pilgrimage, and healing miracles were said to be frequently performed there by St. Michael. In 1044 Edward the Confessor granted the Mount as a cell to the Benedictines of Mont St. Michel, an island monastery off Brittany.

During the lawless reign of Richard I, Henry of Pomeroy tried to make the Mount into a stronghold. With some armed men disguised as pilgrims, he obtained admittance, disarmed the monks and drove them away. Pomeroy was in his turn attacked by the King's forces. Sooner than surrender, he bled himself to death.

During the Wars of the Roses the place was invaded by the Earl of Oxford. A few years later, the wretched Perkin Warbeck left his wife on the Mount when he made his abortive attempt to claim the throne of England.

In 1660, Colonel John St. Aubyn bought the island, and his descendants still reside there.

The St. Aubyns converted the monastery buildings into a fortress. The great rock—presented to the National Trust in 1953—is still dominated by the fourteenth - century tower, which stands 238 feet above the water.

At the summit of the tower are the remains of a stone lantern with which the monks used to direct fishermen on dark nights. It is known locally as St. Michael's Chair. A tradition persists that the first of a newly married couple who dares to sit in this perilous seat, with nothing between it and the sea, will be the dominant partner.

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(Tournament winner will be announced in JOHN BULL dated September 22.)

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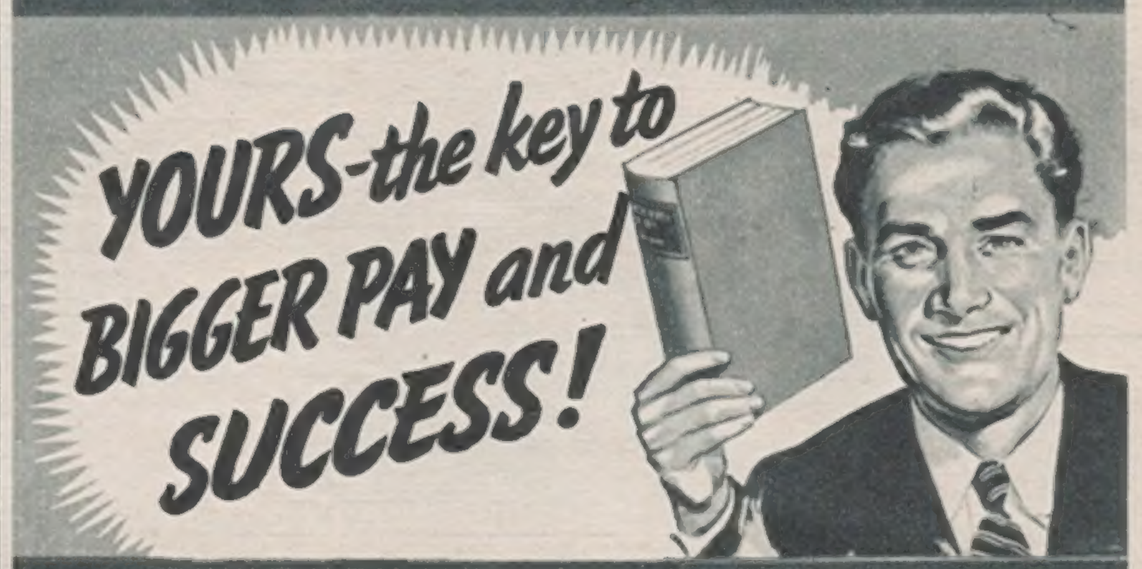

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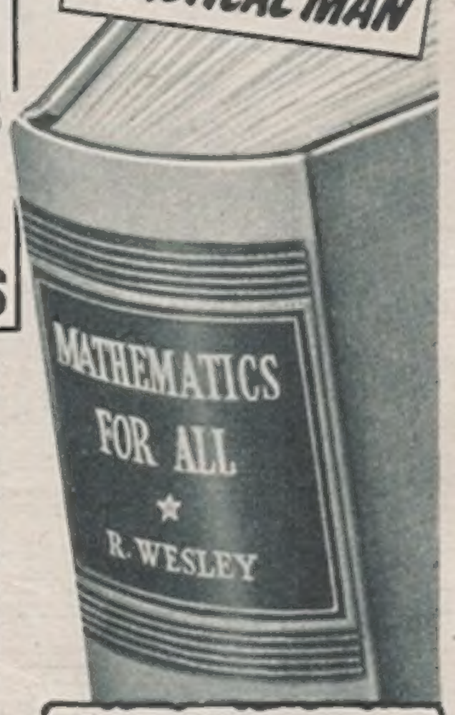

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